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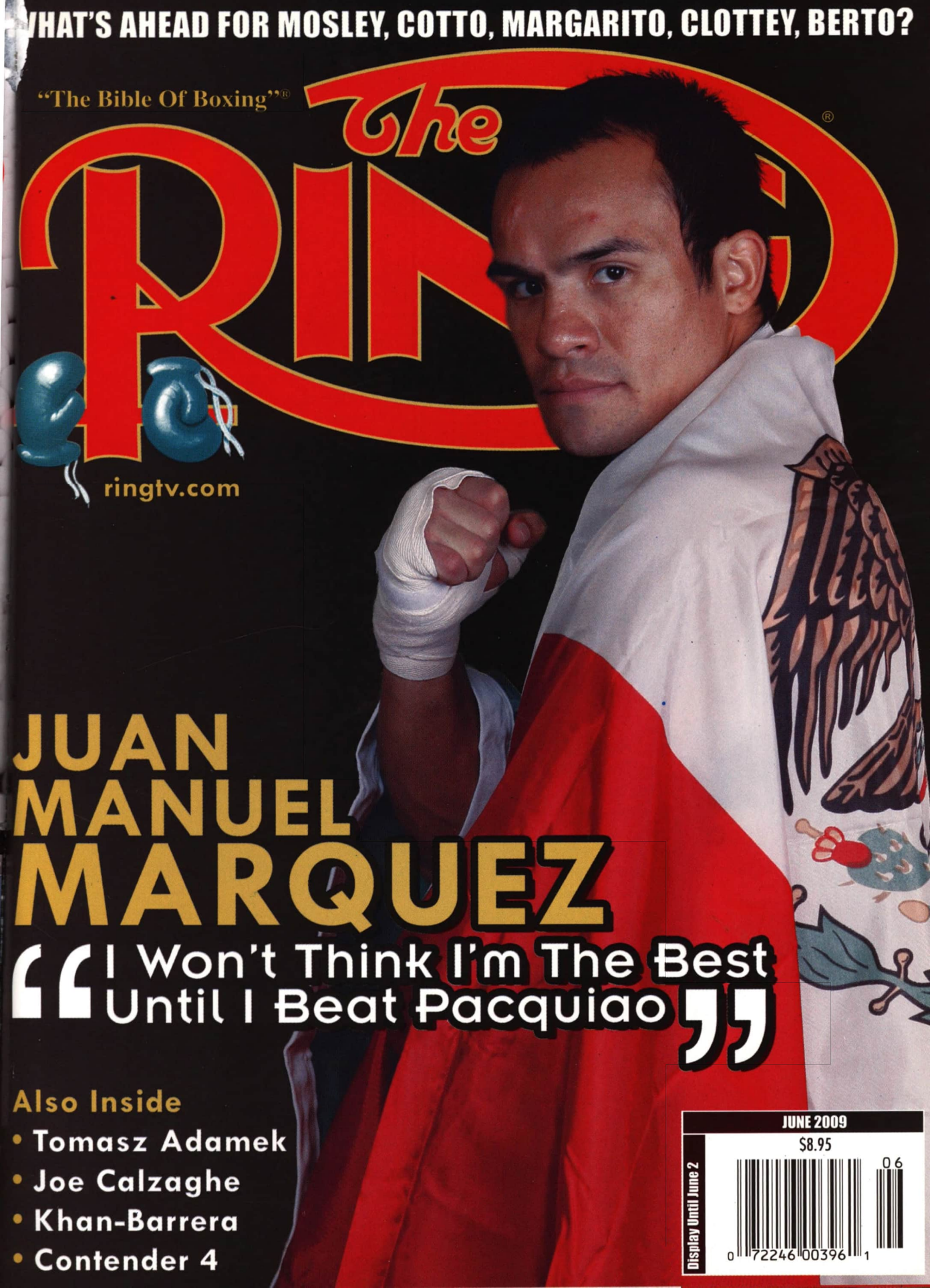

JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ

"I Won't Think I'm The Best Until I Beat Pacquiao"

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Volume 88, No. 7 June 2009

The RING

Not To Be Taken For Granted

Ricky Hatton will defend the world junior welterweight championship against Manny Pacquiao just a few days after this issue of THE RING reaches readers. But this is not about their fight, so it doesn't really matter if it's over by the time you turn to this page.

This is about Ricky and Manny—and how lucky we are to have them representing this bittersweet obsession we call boxing.

It is no accident that they are the two most popular active fighters in the world, and it's only partially because of what they've accomplished inside the ring.

You can't separate the fighter from the man or the man from the fighter. They are one in the same, two interwoven parts of the whole. Great fighters come in many flavors, ranging from thugs to holy warriors. Most fall somewhere in between those extremes, but just like the rest of us, all of them are captive of who they are and the sum of their experiences.

You have to be more than a special fighter to generate the sort of adulation afforded Pacquiao and Hatton; you have to be special person as well.

Pacquiao's unlikely and spectacular rise from object poverty to arguably the most popular Filipino of all-time could have just as easily have made him arrogant and conceited. Instead, he remains humble and generous to a fault, a charismatic, almost magical figure who seems to love his fans as much as they love him.

Hatton, from working-class roots, has remained just one of the lads despite his fame and fortune. What you see is what you get with Ricky. His everyman persona is as real as his left hook to the liver, and those who turn his fights into near-religious experiences, complete with blind allegiance and hymn-like chants of praise, know that, win or lose, he will never let them down.

How could he? He's one of them and always will be.

But don't think for a second that these guys are saints. That would spoil half the fun. Besides, what's the use of being a prizefighter is you can't enjoy yourself now and then. Hatton's appetite for booze, fatty-foods, and the pub culture is part and parcel of his public persona, and it endears him to the people the same way George Foreman's cheeseburger jokes used to do.

Pacquiao's past dalliances with wine, women, and gambling are no secret either, but whenever his peccadilloes became public, he handled them with class and the storm quickly blew over. That's how it is with Manny. He seems to lead a charmed life, and that too draws people to him, especially the disenfranchised hoping some of it will rub off on them.

None of this would mean much if Hatton and Pacquiao could not fight the way they do—with total courage and commitment, each and every time. Their eagerness to fight the best possible opponents and the ferociousness of their styles also figure considerably into the equation.

But it's not until you begin to look at all the parts that make up the whole that you start to understand why fighters like Manny and Ricky are so rare. It's not just a stew of ingredients we're talking about. Balance is crucial, and the portions and ratios of each characteristic have to be just right.

But when they are, when that elusive receipe is achieved, we too are blessed, because fighters such as Pacquiao and Hatton are the best argument for boxing. And the reason we keep coming back for more.

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[Opening Shot]

What's Next, Billiards?

After Manny Pacquiao was soundly beaten by Ricky Hatton in the dart game "501" at a neighborhood pub in Manchester in late-February, the ultra-competitive Filipino had revenge on his mind. May 2 could not come fast enough. And, if somehow the oddsmakers are wrong and Hatton is able to successfully defend The Ring junior welterweight championship when they clash in Las Vegas, we're sure Manny would welcome him to the Philippines for a game of 10-ball. It's even harder to envision an upset there.

PHOTO BY MATTHEW LEWIS/GETTY IMAGES

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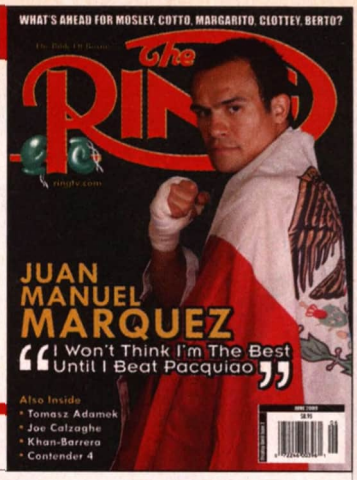

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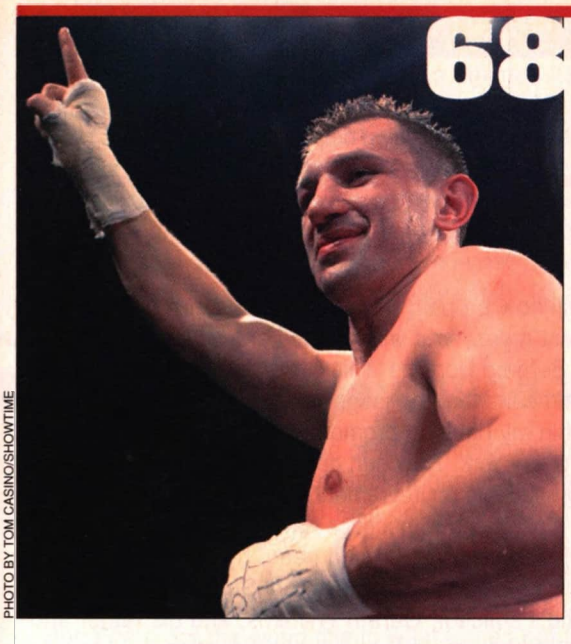

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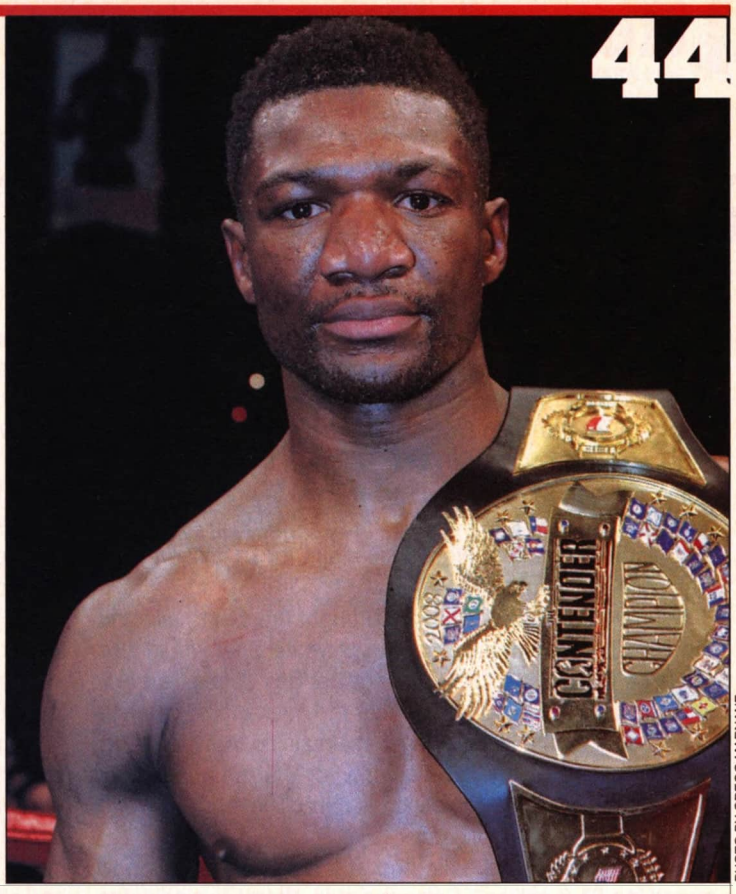

PHOTO BY GREGG MARINANE

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Court Victory For Calzaghe

Joe Calzaghe, unbeaten in the ring since he was a 17-year-old amateur through his retirement on February 5, 2009, secured another significant victory, over his former manager and promoter, Frank Warren, on March 16 at the High Court in London. Justice Wyn Williams ordered Sports Network, Warren's company, to pay the Welshman £1.8-million ($2.5-million) in unpaid fees relating to Calzaghe's win over Bernard Hopkins in April 2008 and dismissed Sports Network's claim for £1-million from Calzaghe for breach of promise.

Warren and Sports Network brought the claim, alleging that they had a verbal contract to promote what would turn out to be Calzaghe's final fight, against Roy Jones, last November. Calzaghe countersued for the outstanding balance of his purse for the Hopkins fight, maintaining that there was no agreement, verbal or otherwise, for Warren and Sports Network to continue promoting his career beyond his world light heavyweight title victory.

"I am relieved and delighted at the court's decision to award me £1.8-million," Calzaghe said. "It totally vindicates what has been my stance throughout. The fight with Frank Warren was not one that I sought, but I am delighted to have remained undefeated through it. The decision means that I will now be paid money that has been owed to me for almost a year and which was hard earned in the ring against Bernard Hopkins. This completely reflects my position and means that the judge has made it clear that I was fully within my rights to promote my final bout against Roy Jones in New York. The court decision also means that I can move forward into my retirement from the ring with a difficult chapter closed and with justice having been done."

The judge said that he had heard from Warren, Sports Network company secretary Ed Simons, Calzaghe, Calzaghe's solicitor, Gareth Williams, and his father and trainer, Enzo, about a meeting at which the then-world super middleweight champion was alleged to have agreed verbally to a further contract with his promoter.

"I have formed the clear view that I should treat the evidence of each of these witnesses with caution," Justice Williams said. "I say now that there are aspects of the evidence given by each of these persons which has caused me to reflect long and hard upon their credibility, accuracy, and reliability."

But he concluded that Warren had not established his case that there was a verbal agreement. "If an oral agreement was concluded as alleged, I have no doubt that some written record would have been created prior to the fight with Mr. Hopkins," said Justice Williams. "In my judgment, it simply beggars belief that no written record of this alleged promotional agreement would have been created. Of one thing I am certain: Mr. Warren and Mr. Simons are astute and experienced businessmen who have a keen eye for their own commercial interests. That is not intended as a criticism but a statement of fact. However, it means that their behavior in failing to produce one shred of paper which recorded this alleged agreement is inexplicable.

"In my judgment, the claim in his case has been

PHOTO BY SHAUN CURRY/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Warren and Calzaghe in 2004

raised as a smokescreen by the claimant as an attempt to avoid payment by the claimant to the defendant of a very substantial sum of money."

In a statement, Warren said he planned to appeal over the amount Sports Network must pay Calzaghe: "Sports Network Limited have always paid every fighter what he was due, but in this case Joe Calzaghe demanded $4.6-million (about £3.28-million), which Sports Network regarded as exaggerated and fanciful. Sports Network, throughout the litigation, has always said that it would pay Joe Calzaghe, but we disputed the sum he claimed." He added that Sports Network was vindicated in defending Calzaghe's claim, having reduced it by almost £1.5-million. Their lawyers, he said, had advised an appeal to reduce the sum even further.

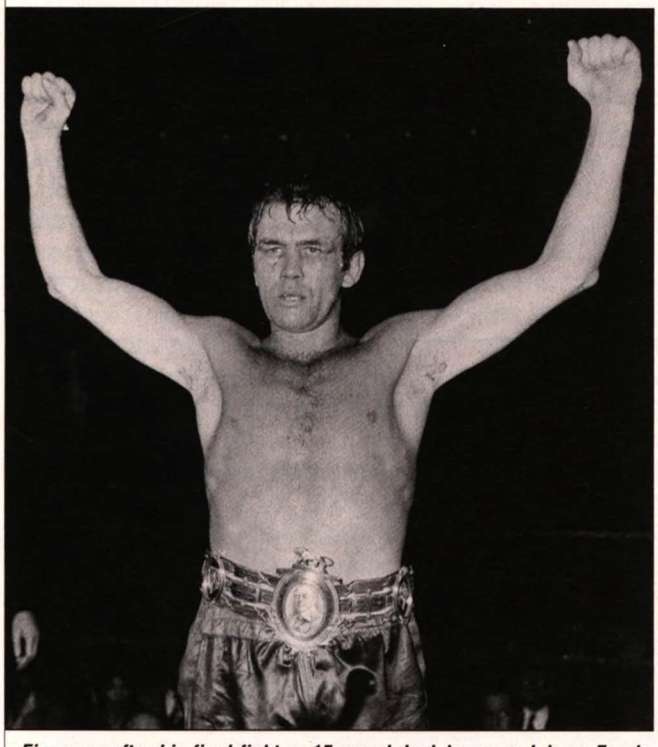
Warren said he was "extremely disappointed" that the judge did not accept that they had an agreement to promote Calzaghe's final fight.

—Brian Doogan

Chris Finnegan, 1944-2009

Chris Finnegan, the son of Irish immigrants from Drogheda who settled in Iver, Buckinghamshire, was one of the great characters in British boxing. An Olympic gold medalist at middleweight at the 1968 Games in Mexico City, he went on to become British, Commonwealth, and European light heavyweight champion before challenging Bob Foster for the world title in what turned out to be THE RING's 1972 Fight of the Year.

Finnegan had no doubt about just how fearsome the formidable Foster was. "When you're in there with Foster, it's like having a loaded gun pointed at your head," he acknowledged. "One wrong move and the lights go out." But Finnegan was brave and he mounted perhaps the most impressive challenge during Foster's imposing six-year title reign. Finnegan was floored in the 10th round, but rallied and took the fight to Foster for the next few rounds until, exhausted by his efforts and diminished by the American's piston-like punching, he got knocked out by a left hook in the 14th round.



Finnegan after his final fight, a 15-round decision over Johnny Franklin in 1975

His misfortune was to have encountered such an accomplished champion in the regal deputy sheriff of Albuquerque, New Mexico, who was so affected by Finnegan's performance that he appointed him an honorary deputy sheriff of his city.

"Chris was a great technician and one of the toughest men I ever fought," said John Conteh, who succeeded Foster and twice beat Finnegan for the British and European titles. "He was tall, had a great stance, and could have been a really good boxer, but he liked nothing more than to get into a fight. When you talk about fighting spirit, he had it and he might have been a world champion in another era."

Finnegan's father was a bricklayer and he followed the old man into the trade before he and his brother, Kevin, became noted amateur boxers. As an out-of-work hod-carrier, he was brought before a magistrate's court in Slough shortly before the Mexico Olympics for having not paid National Insurance stamps. When the magistrate asked him when he would be able to settle the debt, Finnegan replied, "Not for the next five weeks at least, sir. You see, I'm going to be out of the country representing Britain at the Olympic Games." The magistrate might have taken a hard line and prevented him from leaving the country until the government was paid, but he wished him luck and suggested that when he returned to pay the outstanding sum, he might have a gold medal to show off too.

He survived two standing counts in his semifinal bout against American Al Jones before defeating Aleksey Kisselyov of the Soviet Union in the final. He was appointed a Member of the British Empire (MBE) by Queen Elizabeth II upon his return and he reflected, "I feel like I've done something different and, for once, I'm not just a silly, old bricklayer."

He finished his career with a record of 29-7-1 (16). His brother, Kevin, predeceased him last year. "I've got the right hump with Kevin and I won't be going to his funeral," Chris told a friend who asked him why, as they had always been so close. "Well, he won't be going to mine," he replied sadly. Chris Finnegan died from pneumonia, aged 64, on March 2, 2009.

—Brian Doogan

TV Fights of the Month

Compiled By Martin Mulcahey

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
02/27/09	Antwone Smith W 8 Norberto Gonzalez	ESPN2	w	C	C+	C+
	Accuracy defeats power, and produces the lone knockdown					
02/27/09	Glen Johnson W 10 Daniel Judah	ESPN2	lh	B	C	C
	Judah goes into survival mode after first-round knockdown					
02/27/09	Giovanni Lorenzo KO 2 Dionisio Miranda	Showtime	m	B-	C+	C
	Naturally bigger Lorenzo ends fight with one-punch kayo					
02/27/09	**Tomasz Adamek KO 8 Johnathon Banks**	**Showtime**	**c**	**A**	**A-**	**B+**
	Four-punch kayo recalls Ray Mercer's bludgeoning of Tommy Morrison					
02/28/09	Eric Ortiz KO 5 Valentin Leon	TV Azteca	fl	C+	D	C
	Aging former titlist stays busy in search of final title shot					
02/28/09	Simphiwe Nongqayi W 12 Francisco Arce	TV Azteca	jb	B-	B	B-
	Arce brothers suffer big loses three weeks apart					
02/28/09	Chris John D 12 Rocky Juarez	HBO	f	A	A-	B+
	John controls the fight, but Rocky lands the bigger punches					
02/28/09	**Juan Manuel Marquez KO 9 Juan Diaz**	**HBO**	**l**	**A+**	**A**	**A**
	Marquez soaks up pressure and then wrings out opponent					
03/06/09	Raymond Serrano W 6 Jay Krupp	ESPN2	w	C	C	C+
	Krupp can't win north of the Mason-Dixon Line					
03/06/09	Delvin Rodriguez W 12 Shamone Alvarez	ESPN2	w	B	B+	B+
	Rodriguez survives late rally to win corker					
03/07/09	Robert Frankel W 10 Ricardo Dominguez	TV Azteca	l	C	C	C+
	Hometown kid gets deserved decision in a close fight					
03/07/09	Mike Alvarado KO 10 Emmanuel Clottey	TV Azteca	jw	C+	C	B-
	Clottey dropped as if a trap door had opened beneath him					
03/07/09	Robert Guerrero NC 2 Daud Yordan	HBO	jl	B+	B	D
	Unknown Thai looked better than Guerrero in cut-shortened bout					
03/07/09	Victor Ortiz KO 2 Mike Arnaoutis	HBO	jw	B	B-	C+
	Is Ortiz that good or Arnaoutis that disappointing?					
03/07/09	James Kirkland KO 6 Joel Julio	HBO	jm	B+	B+	B
	Kirkland's unrelenting style is right out of a zombie movie					
03/13/09	Lucian Bute KO 4 Fulgencio Zuniga	Showtime	sm	B	C	C+
	Bute draws 12,000 fans for tuneup!					
03/14/09	Joksan Hernandez KO 10 Jonathan Arias	TV Azteca	jf	C+	B	B
	Two good clubfighters club each other					
03/14/09	Giovanni Segura KO 4 Cesar Canchila	TV Azteca	jfl	B+	A-	B+
	Segura avenges loss emphatically; rubber match anyone?					
03/14/09	Matthew Hall KO 2 Matthew Macklin	PPV	jm	C+	B-	C+
	Even mediocre Manchester fighters will be compared to Hatton					
03/14/09	Ola Afolabi KO 9 Enzo Maccarinelli	PPV	c	A-	B	B-
	Maccarinelli's head is a magnet for right hands					
03/14/09	Roman Martinez KO 4 Nicky Cook	PPV	jl	B	B+	B+
	Martinez' title reign might not be long, but it will be exciting					
03/14/09	Amir Khan KO 4 Marco Antonio Barrera	PPV	l	A	B	C
	Cut and circumstances are eerily reminiscent of De La Hoya- Chavez I					

Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(RING championship fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Boxing Bookshelf

When sportswriters with more than a passing interest in literature are asked to pick the greatest of boxing novels, the two books that are usually mentioned are W. C. Heinz' *The Professional*, and Leonard Gardner's *Fat City*. Ironically, those two oft-praised titles have had very little influence on fight fiction. Perhaps Heinz and Gardner are appreciated, but when writers sit down to create their own novels, they don't go near Heinz and Gardner's work-a-day descriptions of fighters doing their job. It's easier, and perhaps more commercial, to write a standard tale of hard-bitten characters seeking redemption through sweat and pain.

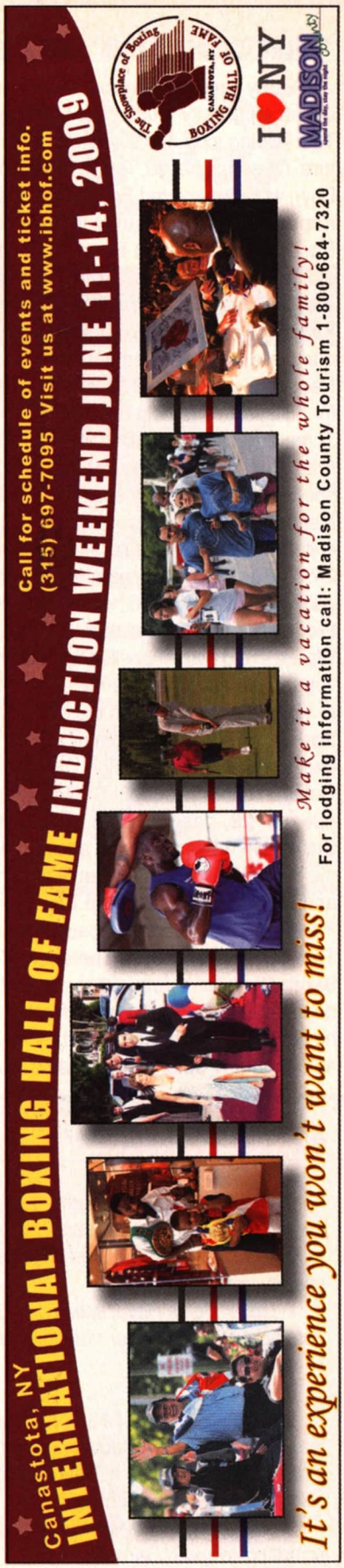
Ivan Goldman's *The Barfighter* (Permanent Press, hardcover, 248 pages, $28.00) is a rarity in that it approaches the small, realistic nuances of the Heinz/Gardner school, but doesn't shy away from the big, time-honored motifs. Goldman's characters, like most fictional boxing folks, seek salvation and respect, but the book also delves into the nuts and bolts of boxing.

The Barfighter concerns Lee Cheskis, a junior-college instructor with a predilection for getting into fights. At an anger management class he meets a young gangbanger, Marvin "Quick" O'Brien, who happens to be interested in boxing. Cheskis, who boxed in college and the Army, takes Marvin on as a protégé. This alone would've made an intriguing story, but several chapters go back in time to reveal Cheski's checkered past, which includes a troubled marriage and his days at the fringe of the 1960s Bay Area counterculture.

One of the joys of *The Barfighter* is that Goldman takes characters that at first glance seem like stock creations, and graces them with an underlying humanity. For instance, Eddie the trainer may look like the standard gym rat known from previous boxing stories, but rather than a crusty old salt with a heart of gold, he's actually got a bit of a mean streak. You wouldn't want to spar with him or leave him alone with your girlfriend. That sort of touch keeps *The Barfighter* from becoming predictable, although some of the traditional stuff is here, too, including crooked promoters and slimy pressmen. Goldman handles the fight scenes well; one may never see a pair of Reyes gloves without thinking of them being, in Goldman's words, "manufactured by Mexican sadists." Goldman is also handy with descriptions of Santa Cruz in the '60s—this is probably the only boxing novel on record with references to novelist/LSD guru Ken Kesey.

The Barfighter is a good read, and at a time when boxing novels are not particularly fashionable, its presence in the bookstalls is more than welcome. Readers familiar with Goldman's monthly contributions to THE RING will recognize his distinct voice throughout the novel. One of the book's recurring themes is the never-ending battle with bureaucracy, whether in boxing, the educational system, or journalism. In Goldman's world, delivering a clean left hook to the chin is a rare and cherished moment, but rarer still is a victory over the bean-counters who tend to gum up the works.

—Don Stradley

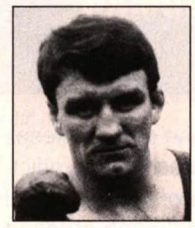


Outside the Ropes

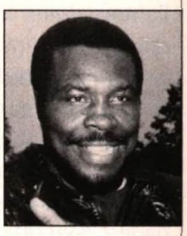
Manny Pacquiao was a very busy man before embarking on a publicity tour for his May 2 fight with **Ricky Hatton**. The Filipino icon has a starring role in a new action-adventure TV series called *Totoy Bato* (Strong Boy), which premiered February 23 on the Kapuso network … Earlier in the month, Pacquiao received an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humanities from Southwestern University in Cebu City. University President **Dr. Eldigario Gonzalez** said the doctorate was awarded not just to honor Pacquiao's success in boxing, but also for his initiative to help his countrymen …

Pacquiao: Honorary doctorate

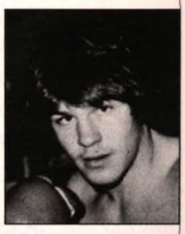
Three boxers from Britain's 2008 boxing team, **James DeGale**, **Frankie Gavin**, and **Billy Joe Sanders**, were presented with a special limited edition medal from the Birmingham Mint … On March 17 British television network ITV4 aired a tribute to legendary writer/commentator **Reg Gutteridge**, who died January 24. Among the guests were **Sir Henry Cooper** and **Chris Eubank** … A plaque in the honor of former lightweight champion **Freddy Welsh** has been mounted at the site of "The Welsh Wizard's" old gym opposite the railway station in Pontypridd, where Welsh was born in 1886. The plaque was unveiled by **Dai Dower**, the 75-year-old former British, Empire, and European flyweight titleholder … Cuban amateur standout **Guillermo Rigondeaux**, 28, has defected to the United States. He made an earlier attempt to flee his homeland in 2007, when Rigondeaux and two teammates were in Brazil for the Pan-Am Games, but was caught and sent back to Cuba … The **Amateur Boxing Association of England** turned down **Sarah Blewden**'s request to compete on the grounds that breast enlargement she underwent in 2003 put her at greater health risk. "My surgeon said they made me no more vulnerable than any other woman," said the 25-year-old Blewden, who took up the sport two years ago to keep physically fit. The ABAE said that it had hoped to develop a protective breastplate to allow women like Blewden to box competitively, but that research funding had been withdrawn … Police in Sydney, Australia, released Hall of Famer **Jeff Fenech**, 44, without charges after questioning him for more than four hours about an altercation involving the ex-fighter and his long-time friend **Peter Mitrevski**. "I'm sorry for even arguing with my friend, it's something I never wanted to do," said Fenech. "Hopefully, it can get mended" … Troubled two-division former titleholder **Johnny Tapia**, 42, was in court again in early-March, charged with cocaine use. Judge **Kenneth Mart** delayed sentencing and allowed Tapia to remain free providing he wear an ankle monitor … U.S. District Judge **Michael J. Reagan** granted ESPN's motion to dismiss **Floyd "Jumbo" Cummings**' $50-million lawsuit against ESPN Classic. Cummings sued because of the alleged re-broadcast of his 1981 bout with **Joe Frazier**, contending his rights under the Illinois Right of Publicity Act by using his name for commercial purposes without permission. Judge Reagan pointed out that the Illinois law exempts "any news, public affairs, or sports broadcast" … Junior middleweight **Jovany Medina**, 19, suffered a brain injury during a bout on March 15 at the Oregon State Golden Gloves Tournament in Redmond. Medina was taken by helicopter to St. Charles Medical Center-Bend, where he underwent emergency surgery … **Dr. Donald Romero**, 86, who once estimated he'd served as ringside physician for more than 10,000 fights, died in Las Vegas on February 15. Dr. Romero was instrumental in establishing the Ringside Physicians Association … Long-time New Mexico boxing figure **Stan Gallup**, 86, died on February 21. Gallup, a member of the legendary Flying Tigers during World War II, started the Golden Gloves of America Tournament in 1964 and worked as an official at both professional and amateur fight cards for decades … **Barbara Quartey**, the 47-year-old wife of former WBA welterweight titleholder **Ike Quartey**, died at the Raphael Clinic in Accra, Ghana, in late-February following a brief illness … Former middleweight contender **Mickey Goodwin**, 51, died of a stroke at his Detroit home on March 3. Goodwin, one of the Kronk Gym's first stars, never fought for a world title despite compiling an overall pro record of 40-2-1 (28). Hall of Fame trainer **Emanuel Steward** called Goodwin the "best natural puncher" he'd ever worked with. In recent years, Goodwin dedicated most of his time to training amateurs at his River Rouge Boxing Club in Melvindale, Michigan … Former Australian heavyweight titleholder **Vince Cervi**, 41, was shot to death in Melbourne on March 9. Cervi, 11-5-2 (8), retired in 1997 and had worked in the security industry for the past 10 years. Preston resident **David Allan Curran**, 45, has been arrested and charged with Cervi's murder.



Welsh: Plaque in Pontypridd



Cummings: Suit dismissed



Goodwin: Stroke victim

Quotable

"We sometimes order take-out food for dinner, and they would bring it to our house and I was embarrassed to answer the door and sign the check. I didn't want to see anyone."

—Oscar De La Hoya, speaking to Dan Rafael of espn.com about his emotional state following his knockout loss to Manny Pacquiao

"B-Hop was my idol 10 years ago, but he is a long, long way from 'The Executioner' of old. Bernard knows if he faces me it will be his last fight, because I won't just beat him, I will knock him out."

—Super middleweight contender Sakio Bika, attempting to goad Bernard Hopkins into fighting him

[Ratings Analysis]

For Period Ended March 15, 2009

Heavyweights: No changes.
Cruiserweights: Enzo Maccarinelli (sixth last issue) exits after being stopped by Ola Afolabi, who debuts at nine. Maccarinelli's departure enables Vadim Tokarev (seventh last issue), Giacobbe Fragomeni (eighth last issue), and Troy Ross (ninth last issue) to move up one place each.
Light Heavyweights: No changes.
Super Middleweights: No changes.
Middleweights: No changes.
Junior Middleweights: James Kirkland (10th last issue) switches with Joachim Alcine (ninth last issue), thanks to Kirkland's impressive stoppage of Joel Julio.
Welterweights: No changes.
Junior Welterweights: No changes.
Lightweights: No changes.
Junior Lightweights: Roman Martinez (eighth last issue) surges to fifth place thanks to his fourth-round stoppage of Nicky Cook (fifth last issue). The loss drops Cook to nine and boosts Jorge Linares (ninth last issue) to eight.
Featherweights: Takahiro Aoh (ninth last issue) moves up one spot after decisioning Oscar Larios (eighth last issue), who falls out of the ratings. Larios' departure enables Cristobal Cruz (10th last issue) to move up one place and allow Choi Tseveenpurev to re-enter the ratings at 10.
Junior Featherweights: No changes.
Bantamweights: Vusi Malinga (eighth last issue) drops out of the ratings after being stopped in one round by number-one rated Hozumi Hasegawa. Roberto Vasquez (ninth last issue) moves to eight, while Nehomar Cermeno debuts at nine.
Junior Bantamweights: Fernando Montiel (second last issue) leaves to campaign at bantamweight as does Cristian Mijares (third last issue). To date, neither has accomplished enough at 118 pounds to merit a top-10 rating. Montiel and Mijares' exit also moves up everyone rated four through 10 last issue two places each and creates room for Daiki Kameda to debut at nine and Raul Martinez to enter at 10.
Flyweights: No changes.
Junior Flyweights: Brahim Asloum (eighth last issue) exits due to inactivity, moving Juan Carlos Reveco (ninth last issue) and Bert Batawang (10th last issue) up one place each. Munetsugu Kayo debuts at 10.
Strawweights: Milan Melindo debuts at five after stopping Muhammad Rachman (fifth last issue), who drops to six. The inclusion of Melindo pushes down everyone rated six through nine last issue one rung each and jettisons Ronald Barrera (10th last issue).
Pound-for-pound: No changes.

The RING
"THE BIBLE OF BOXING"

Pound-For-Pound

1. **Manny Pacquiao**
   Welterweight
2. **Juan Manuel Marquez**
   Lightweight
3. **Bernard Hopkins**
   Light Heavyweight
4. **Israel Vazquez**
   Junior Featherweight
5. **Shane Mosley**
   Welterweight
6. **Rafael Marquez**
   Junior Featherweight
7. **Ivan Calderon**
   Junior Flyweight
8. **Ricky Hatton**
   Junior Welterweight
9. **Celestino Caballero**
   Junior Featherweight
10. **Vic Darchinyan**
    Junior Bantamweight

For weekly updated Ring ratings, go to **ringtv.com**

The Ring Ratings

For Period Ended March 15, 2009

PHOTO BY ALEX LIVESEY/GETTY IMAGES

Cruiserweight Ola Afolabi debuts at nine after stopping Enzo Maccarinelli

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

Fighters recognized as champions by THE RING are rated at the top of their division, with the top 10 contenders listed below.

Championship vacancies can be filled by winning a box-off between THE RING's number-one and number-two contenders, or, in certain instances, a box-off between our number-one and number-three contenders.

The only three occasions when a fighter will lose his championship status are when he retires, moves to another weight division, or is defeated in a championship bout.

THE RING Ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board, with the participation of THE RING Ratings Panel of boxing journalists from around the world. To see the complete list of our panelists, click on "Ratings" at ringtv.com.

Records provided by boxrec.com.

Heavyweights

Weight Unlimited

Champ: Vacant

1. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO** Ukraine 52-3 (46)
2. **VITALI KLITSCHKO** Ukraine 36-2 (35)
3. **RUSLAN CHAGAEV** Uzbekistan 25-0-1 (17)
4. **ALEXANDER POVETKIN** Russia 16-0 (12)
5. **NICOLAY VALUEV** Russia 50-1 (34)
6. **SULTAN IBRAGIMOV** Russia 22-1-1 (17)
7. **SAMUEL PETER** Nigeria 30-2 (23)
8. **OLEG MASKAEV** Kazakhstan 36-6 (27)
9. **JUAN CARLOS GOMEZ** Cuba 44-1 (35)
10. **ALEXANDER DIMITRENKO** Ukraine 29-0 (19)

Jr. Middleweights

Weight Limit: 154 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **VERNON FORREST** Atlanta, GA 41-3 (29)
2. **PAUL WILLIAMS** Augusta, GA 36-1 (27)
3. **VERNO PHILLIPS** Belize 42-12-1 (21)
4. **CORY SPINKS** St. Louis, MO 36-5 (11)
5. **SERGIO MARTINEZ** Argentina 44-1-2 (24)
6. **SERGIO MORA** Los Angeles, CA 21-1-1 (5)
7. **SERGEI DZINZIRUK** Ukraine 36-0 (22)
8. **DANIEL SANTOS** Puerto Rico 32-3-1 (23)
9. **JAMES KIRKLAND** Austin, TX 25-0 (22)
10. **JOACHIM ALCINE** Haiti 30-1 (19)

Featherweights

Weight Limit: 126 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **CHRIS JOHN** Indonesia 42-0-2 (22)
2. **STEVEN LUEVANO** La Puente, CA 36-1-1 (15)
3. **JORGE SOLIS** Mexico 37-1-2 (27)
4. **ROCKY JUAREZ** Houston, TX 28-4 (20)
5. **HIROYUKI ENOKI** Japan 28-1-2 (20)
6. **MARIO SANTIAGO** Puerto Rico 19-1-1 (14)
7. **MARTIN HONORIO** Mexico 25-4-1 (13)
8. **TAKAHIRO AOH** Japan 17-1-1 (8)
9. **CRISTOBAL CRUZ** Mexico 38-11-1 (23)
10. **CHOI TSEVEENPUREV** Mongolia 27-4 (19)

Jr. Featherweights

Weight Limit: 122 pounds

Champ: ISRAEL VAZQUEZ Mexico 43-4 (31)

1. **RAFAEL MARQUEZ** Mexico 37-5 (33)
2. **CELESTINO CABALLERO** Panama 31-2 (22)
3. **JUAN MANUEL LOPEZ** Puerto Rico 24-0 (22)
4. **POONSAWAT KRATINGAENGGYM** Thailand 37-1 (26)
5. **DANIEL PONCE DE LEON** Mexico 35-2 (31)
6. **STEVE MOLITOR** Canada 28-1 (11)
7. **RICARDO CORDOBA** Panama 34-1-2 (21)
8. **JHONNY GONZALEZ** Mexico 40-6 (34)
9. **RENDALL MUNROE** England 17-1 (7)
10. **TOSHIAKI NISHIOKA** Japan 33-4-3 (20)

Bantamweights

Weight Limit: 118 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **HOZUMI HASEGAWA** Japan 26-2 (10)
2. **ANSELMO MORENO** Panama 24-1-1 (8)
3. **WLADIMIR SIDORENKO** Ukraine 21-1-2 (7)
4. **SILENCE MABUZA** South Africa 22-2 (18)
5. **JOSEPH AGBEKO** Ghana 26-1 (22)
6. **GERRY PENALOSA** Philippines 54-6-2 (36)
7. **ABNER MARES** Mexico 17-0 (10)
8. **ROBERTO VASQUEZ** Panama 27-2 (20)
9. **NEHOMAR CERMENO** Venezuela 17-0 (10)
10. **WILLIAM GONZALEZ** Nicaragua 21-3 (19)

Cruiserweights
Weight Limit: 200 pounds

Champ: TOMASZ ADAMEK
Poland 37-1 (25)

1. **STEVE CUNNINGHAM**
Philadelphia, PA 21-2 (11)
2. **KRZYSZTOF WLODARCZYK**
Poland 41-2 (31)
3. **GUILLERMO JONES**
Panama 36-3-2 (28)
4. **FIRAT ARSLAN**
Germany 29-4-1 (18)
5. **MARCO HUCK**
Yugoslavia 24-1 (19)
6. **VADIM TOKAREV**
Russia 26-1-1 (19)
7. **GIACOBBE FRAGOMENI**
Italy 26-1 (10)
8. **TROY ROSS**
Canada 21-1 (15)
9. **OLA AFOLABI**
England 14-1-3 (6)
10. **MATT GODFREY**
Providence, RI 18-1 (10)

Light Heavyweights
Weight Limit: 175 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
Philadelphia, PA 49-5-1 (32)
2. **CHAD DAWSON**
New Haven, CT 27-0 (17)
3. **GLEN JOHNSON**
Jamaica 49-12-2 (33)
4. **ANTONIO TARVER**
Orlando, FL 27-5 (19)
5. **ZSOLT ERDEI**
Hungary 30-0 (17)
6. **ROY JONES**
Pensacola, FL 52-5 (38)
7. **CLINTON WOODS**
England 42-4-1 (24)
8. **ADRIAN DIACONU**
Romania 25-0 (15)
9. **HUGO GARAY**
Argentina 32-3 (17)
10. **YUSAF MACK**
Philadelphia, PA 27-2-2 (16)

Super Middleweights
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **MIKKEL KESSLER**
Denmark 41-1 (31)
2. **LUCIAN BUTE**
Romania 24-0 (19)
3. **LIBRADO ANDRADE**
Mexico 27-2 (21)
4. **ANTHONY MUNDINE**
Australia 35-3 (23)
5. **JERMAIN TAYLOR**
Little Rock, AR 28-2-1 (17)
6. **CARL FROCH**
England 24-0 (20)
7. **SAKIO BIKA**
Cameroon 27-3-2 (17)
8. **ALLAN GREEN**
Tulsa, OK 27-1 (19)
9. **KAROLY BALZSAY**
Hungary 20-0 (14)
10. **DENIS INKIN**
Russia 34-1 (24)

Middleweights
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

Champ: KELLY PAVLIK
Youngstown, OH 35-1 (31)

1. **ARTHUR ABRAHAM**
Armenia 29-0 (23)
2. **FELIX STURM**
Germany 31-2-1 (13)
3. **SEBASTIAN SYLVESTER**
Germany 30-3 (15)
4. **KHOREN GEVOR**
Armenia 30-3 (16)
5. **RANDY GRIFFIN**
Louisville, KY 24-2-3 (12)
6. **DAVID LOPEZ**
Mexico 37-12 (23)
7. **JAVIER CASTILLEJO**
Spain 62-8 (43)
8. **AMIN ASIKAINEN**
Finland 25-2 (17)
9. **DANIEL GEALE**
Australia 21-0 (13)
10. **JOHN DUDDY**
Northern Ireland 26-0 (17)

Welterweights
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **SHANE MOSLEY**
Pomona, CA 46-5 (39)
2. **MIGUEL COTTO**
Puerto Rico 33-1 (27)
3. **ANTONIO MARGARITO**
Mexico 37-6 (27)
4. **JOSHUA CLOTTEY**
Ghana 35-2 (20)
5. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
Philippines 48-3-2 (36)
6. **CARLOS QUINTANA**
Puerto Rico 26-2 (20)
7. **ANDRE BERTO**
Winter Haven, FL 24-0 (19)
8. **LUIS COLLAZO**
Queens, NY 29-4 (14)
9. **ZAB JUDAH**
Brooklyn, NY 37-6 (25)
10. **ISAAC HLATSWAYO**
South Africa 28-1-1 (10)

Jr. Welterweights
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

Champ: RICKY HATTON
England 45-1 (32)

1. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY**
Palm Springs, CA 23-0 (11)
2. **JUNIOR WITTER**
England 37-2-2 (22)
3. **ANDREAS KOTELNIK**
Ukraine 31-2-1 (13)
4. **PAUL MALIGNAGGI**
Brooklyn, NY 25-2 (5)
5. **JUAN URANGO**
Colombia 21-1-1 (16)
6. **KENDALL HOLT**
Paterson, NJ 25-2 (13)
7. **RICARDO TORRES**
Colombia 32-2 (28)
8. **HERMAN NGOUDJO**
Cameroon 17-3 (9)
9. **MARCOS MAIDANA**
Argentina 25-1 (24)
10. **NATE CAMPBELL**
Jacksonville, FL 33-5-1 (25)

Lightweights
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

Champ: JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ
Mexico 50-4-1 (37)

1. **JUAN DIAZ**
Houston, TX 34-2 (17)
2. **JOEL CASAMAYOR**
Cuba 36-4-1 (22)
3. **DAVID DIAZ**
Chicago, IL 34-2-1 (17)
4. **JULIO DIAZ**
Mexico 36-4 (26)
5. **ANTONIO PITALUA**
Mexico 46-3 (40)
6. **ALI FUNEKA**
South Africa 30-2-2 (25)
7. **MICHAEL KATSIDIS**
Australia 24-2 (20)
8. **YURI ROMANOV**
Belarus 21-2 (14)
9. **BREIDIS PRESCOTT**
Colombia 21-0 (18)
10. **ANTHONY PETERSON**
Washington, DC 28-0 (19)

Jr. Lightweights
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **EDWIN VALERO**
Venezuela 24-0 (24)
2. **HUMBERTO SOTO**
Mexico 46-7-2 (29)
3. **CASSIUS BALOYI**
South Africa 36-3-1 (19)
4. **MZONKE FANA**
South Africa 28-4 (11)
5. **ROMAN MARTINEZ**
Puerto Rico 22-0-1 (13)
6. **JORGE BARRIOS**
Argentina 47-4-1 (34)
7. **URBANO ANTILLON**
Mexico 25-0 (18)
8. **JORGE LINARES**
Venezuela 26-0 (17)
9. **NICKY COOK**
England 29-2 (16)
10. **ROBERT GUERRERO**
Gilroy, CA 23-1-1 (16)

Jr. Bantamweights
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **VIC DARCHINYAN**
Armenia 32-1-1 (26)
2. **ALEXANDER MUNOZ**
Venezuela 32-3 (27)
3. **NOBUO NASHIRO**
Japan 12-1 (7)
4. **JOSE NAVARRO**
Los Angeles, CA 26-4 (12)
5. **Z GORRES**
Philippines 29-2-2 (16)
6. **JORGE ARCE**
Mexico 51-5-1 (39)
7. **DIMITRI KIRILOV**
Russia 29-4-1 (9)
8. **KOHEI KONO**
Japan 22-4 (8)
9. **DAIKI KAMEDA**
Japan 13-1 (10)
10. **RAUL MARTINEZ**
San Antonio, TX 24-0 (14)

Flyweights
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **NONITO DONAIRE**
Philippines 20-1 (13)
2. **DAISUKE NAITO**
Japan 34-2-3 (22)
3. **PONGSAKLEK WONJONGKAM**
Thailand 70-3-1 (37)
4. **DENKAOSAN KAOVICHIT**
Thailand 46-1-1 (20)
5. **OMAR NARVAEZ**
Argentina 29-0-2 (18)
6. **TAKEFUMI SAKATA**
Japan 33-5-2 (15)
7. **JOSE LOPEZ**
Puerto Rico 38-7-2 (32)
8. **KOKI KAMEDA**
Japan 20-0 (13)
9. **HUGO CAZARES**
Mexico 27-5-1 (20)
10. **MORUTI MTHALANE**
South Africa 22-2 (15)

Jr. Flyweights
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

Champ: IVAN CALDERON
Puerto Rico 32-0 (6)

1. **ULISES SOLIS**
Mexico 28-1-2 (20)
2. **EDGAR SOSA**
Mexico 34-5 (18)
3. **GIOVANNI SEGURA**
Mexico 20-1-1 (16)
4. **CESAR CANCHILA**
Colombia 27-2 (21)
5. **JUANITO RUBILLAR**
Philippines 46-11-7 (22)
6. **OMAR NINO**
Mexico 27-3-1 (11)
7. **NELSON DIEPPA**
Puerto Rico 25-5-2 (14)
8. **JUAN CARLOS RECECO**
Argentina 19-1 (10)
9. **BERT BATAWANG**
Philippines 48-11-1 (36)
10. **MUNETSUGU KAYO**
Japan 17-2-2 (9)

Strawweights
Weight Limit: 105 pounds

Champ: GIOVANNI SEGURA
Mexico 20-1-1 (16)

1. **ROMAN GONZALEZ**
Nicaragua 23-0 (20)
2. **RAUL GARCIA**
Mexico 25-0-1 (15)
3. **OLEYDONG SITHSAMERCHAI**
Thailand 29-0 (12)
4. **FLORANTE CONDES**
Philippines 23-4-1 (20)
5. **MILAN MELINDO**
Philippines 18-0 (5)
6. **MUHAMMAD RACHMAN**
Indonesia 62-7-5 (31)
7. **KATSUNARI TAKAYAMA**
Japan 23-3 (9)
8. **DONNIE NIETES**
Philippines 24-1-3 (14)
9. **NKOSINATHI JOYI**
South Africa 19-0 (15)
10. **JUAN PALACIOS**
Nicaragua 25-2 (20)

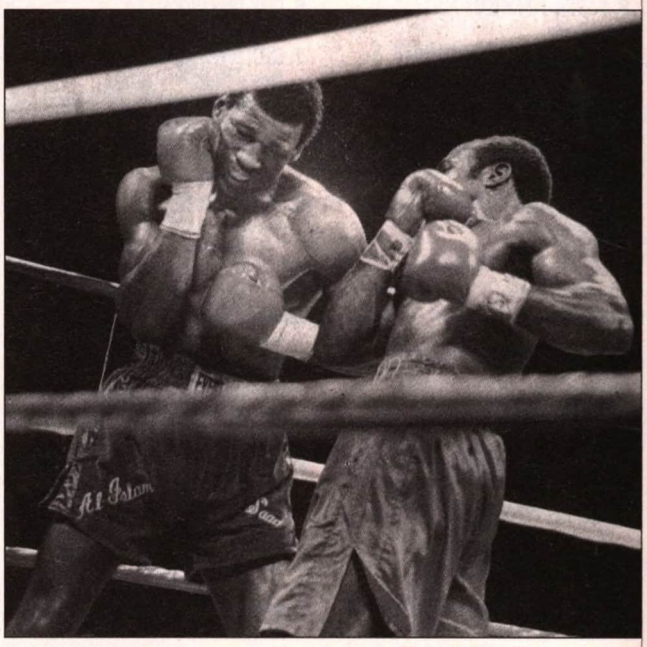
By Jeff Ryan

Both Ends Of The Spectrum

Yo, Adrian! Say it ain't so! Philadelphia's beloved Spectrum (don't expect to see the dopey corporate name that's attached to it appearing in *this* column), one-time home of the NBA 76ers, NHL Flyers, and about a zillion unforgettable ring wars, is closing for good this year. The 42-year-old arena will be razed to make room for Philly Live!, a retail and hotel complex. Great, another freakin' mall! Goodbye blockbuster battles, hello Blockbuster. Goodbye gap in Bernard Hopkins' teeth, hello Gap.

With so few temples of thump left in the world, it goes without saying that a farewell trip to the unusual-looking building at Broad Street and Pattison Avenue quickly became a "must do" upon my learning of the Spectrum's demise. But my initial fear, that my pilgrimage would have to be to an indoor soccer match, minor league hockey game, or performance of Sesame Street Live (the few events left on the arena's dwindling schedule), has been allayed. The last sporting event in Spectrum history, like the first, is going to be a boxing card, most likely on Thursday night, August 6. If you have anything else planned for that evening, cancel it now.

Peltz signs a contract extension in 1974, as Spectrum President Lou Scheinfeld looks on

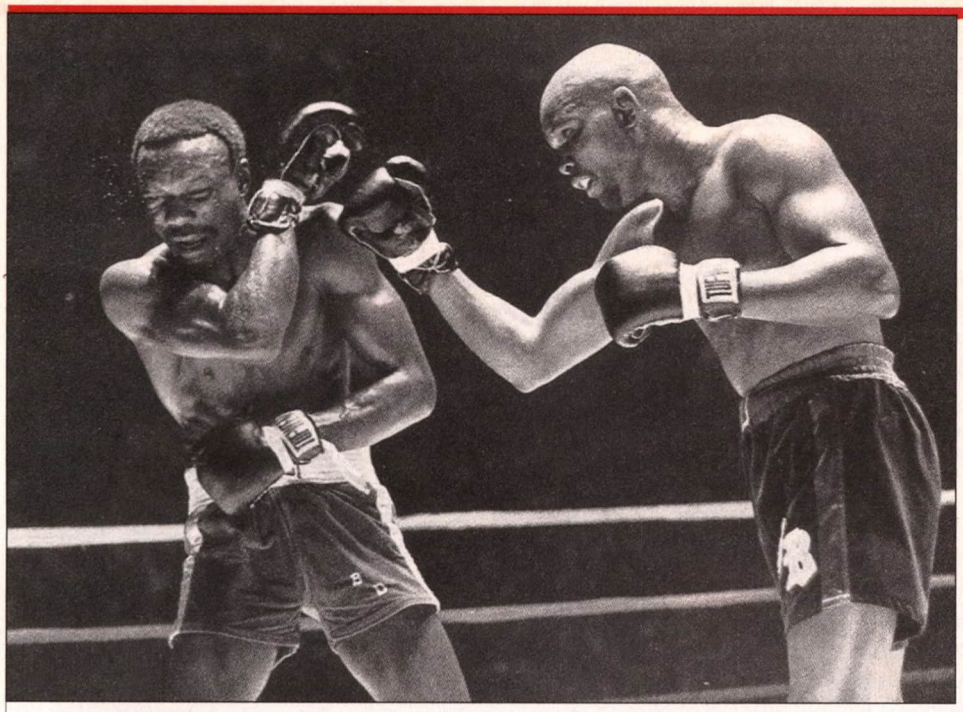


Dwight Qawi attacks Saad Muhammad at the Spectrum

Credit J Russell Peltz, the Hall of Fame promoter who hopes to showcase his rising welterweight, Mike Jones, in the main event. Peltz, the Spectrum's director of boxing from 1972 through 1980 (an era when arenas actually *needed* a director of boxing), is hoping to stage not just a fight card, but a dinner the night before that would welcome back every Spectrum vet from Joe Frazier, Roberto Duran, and Marvin Hagler to Bennie Briscoe, Matthew Saad Muhammad, and Jeff Chandler, with perhaps a B-Hop, a "Boogaloo" Watts, and a Mike Rossman thrown in for good measure. Expect lots of war stories and film clips, reminders that some of those guys could probably still demolish the building with their left hooks, lest the wrecking ball not get the job done.

"The Flyers had two farewell exhibition games last fall and the Sixers played their last game there in March," said Peltz. "This would be boxing's night."

Peltz, who hasn't promoted a show at the Spectrum in six years, committed himself to the idea of an official farewell when he realized one more card would be the 100th in Spectrum history. (He's promoted over 70 of them.) Interestingly, he's never had a real affection for the building, having always preferred the Blue Horizon and the long-gone Philadelphia Arena.



Spectrum staple Briscoe hammers away at Bill Douglas

"The Spectrum didn't have the atmosphere the smaller arenas did," he explained. "And I was in my 20s when I got the job there, so I didn't appreciate things back then."

Now, we'll all get a chance to appreciate it. What's great about the Spectrum's final bow is that this is the kind of deserved goodbye old baseball stadiums and football stadiums often receive, but exiting boxing venues never get. We watched tear-jerking ceremonies for New York's Yankee and Shea Stadiums, Detroit's Tiger Stadium, Chicago's Comiskey Park, Memorial Stadium in Baltimore, and Three Rivers Stadium in Pittsburgh. Some of those ballparks played host to important fight nights, too, but their closing ceremonies sadly overlooked them.

Old Madison Square Garden, Boston Garden, Chicago Stadium, L.A.'s Olympic Auditorium, the Forum in Inglewood, the Forum in Montreal, and Detroit's Olympia each closed its doors without a final night of fisticuffs for old time's sake or a special tribute to its grand fight history. Perhaps it shouldn't be surprising that Philadelphia, a city that so cherishes the past, would treat even its fistic history with more reverence than any other fight town ever would.

Ring Dings: The panel assembled for the "Battle Of The Legends" feature (April 2009 issue), a look at how today's best fighters would fare against those of a generation ago, had to be the worst example of paneling this side of The Brady Bunch's rec room. HBO analyst Max Kellerman, trainer Ronnie Shields, and former WBC featherweight titlist Kevin Kelley couldn't have given me worse heartburn if they'd drizzled battery acid on my chimichanga.

There were so many head-scratchers, my scalp is the color of a radish. The biggest puzzlers were Larry Holmes over Vitali Klitschko in a "very tough, very close fight" (Kellerman), Joe Calzaghe by decision over Michael Spinks (Kellerman), Paul Williams knocking out Wilfred Benitez (Kelley), and Israel Vasquez and Wilfredo Gomez fighting to a draw (Kelley and Shields.) Now, granted, it's kind of boring to pick almost all of one generation's fighters to beat another's, but these picks that overrate today's stars and undervalue a quartet of immortals are just plain silly.

Tyrone Everett (pictured vs. Memin Vega) drew 16,019 fans to the Spectrum for title try against Alfredo Escalera

Personal Perceptions:

The last word on everything from buff to Buffer, whose bellowing into the p.a. system usually makes me want to reach for the Bufferin.

•*Muscle & Fitness* recently rated the "10 Greatest Boxing Physiques Af All-Time," but the magazine blew it by selecting Evander Holyfield the premier body beautiful. Second place went to Wladimir Klitschko, third to Frank Bruno, and fourth to Ken Norton, who should have actually topped the list. (The rest of the top 10 in order: Tyson, a young George Foreman, Jones, Tommy Morrison, Jack Johnson, and Bruce Seldon. No, James Toney, circa 2008, didn't make the cut.)

•If a genie granted me three wishes, the first two would obviously be the elimination of ring deaths and the muzzling of Kellerman. But the third one would be a permanent farewell to cut-inducing accidental headbutts. Robert Guerrero's clash of heads with Daud Yordan (not to mention "The Ghost's" reluctance to battle on after he saw blood) screwed up what could have been a spirited battle.

•There was never a bigger Muhammad Ali fan than me, but my fascination with the man has never blinded me to his dark side. So when Ali was recently honored with the NAACP Image Award, my first question was this: How can you give an "image" award to a guy who at one time used racial slurs, cheated on his wife, dodged the draft, and taunted inferior opponents?

•Another sign of Manny Pacquiao's growing popularity with the mainstream was the San Francisco Giants' planning Manny Pacquiao Night, complete with the handing out "Pac Man" bobblehead dolls to fans in attendance. It would be more fitting, though, if the bobbleheads were of Pacquiao's opponents. The ceramic noggins could bounce around uncontrollably the way the real ones did when the Filipino was whacking on them.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA/TOP RANK

Pacquiao's popularity hits new heights

•Who do you think was more disappointed when Juan Manuel Marquez halted Juan Diaz? Was it Diaz? Or Pacquiao, who probably wants a third meeting with Marquez about as much as he wants to learn that his protective cup is being recalled by the manufacturer for structural defects?

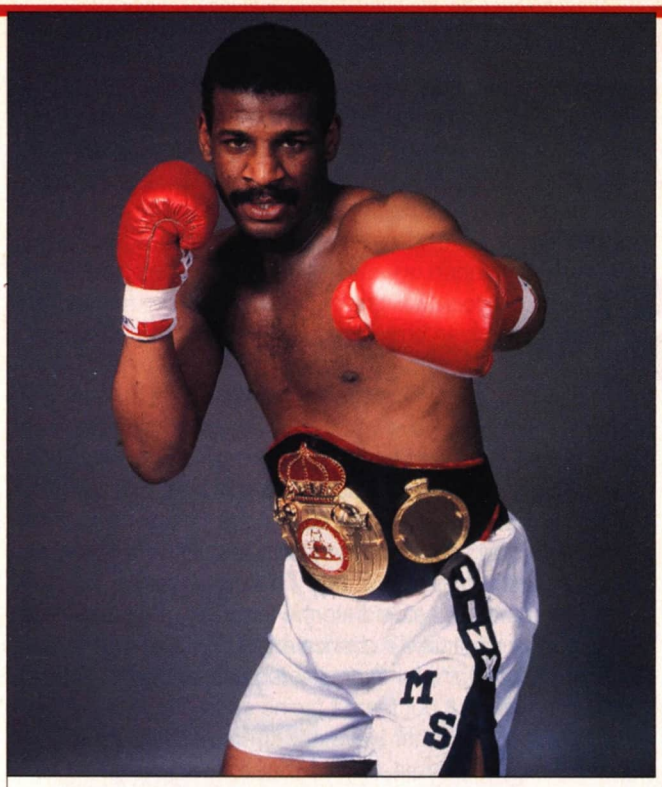
•It would be a good idea if the World Baseball Classic changed its name, or at least stopped referring to itself as the "WBC." For those of us who had grown comfortable with the World Boxing Council's increasing irrelevance, hearing that letter combination blurted out on ESPN every day for a couple of weeks in March was unsettling.

•Does our esteemed editor-in-chief, Nigel Collins, really think Shane Mosley has earned the right to share the nickname of Ray Robinson and Ray Leonard? Give me a break, Boss. If those other two Sugars were ever juicing, it was only on Tropicana or V-8.

•Ring announcer Michael Buffer makes The Amazing Kreskin look clueless. In the course of passing along the time of Mosley's stoppage of Margarito, Buffer made sure to call Sugar Shane's upset win "one of the greatest performances of his Hall of Fame career." Excuse me, Buff Man, but with that pharmaceutical funny business hanging over Mosley's head, enshrinement in Canastota is far from a sure thing.

Klitschko, who quit against an undersized softy like Chris Byrd, wouldn't be able to endure Holmes' right hand. "The Easton Assassin," on the other hand, boasted some of the best recuperative powers of any big man in history and would have withstood any Klitschko offensive. How would a Calzaghe, who was floored by a 43-year-old Hopkins and 39-year-old Roy Jones, avoid getting caught with the potent "Spinks Jinx" for 12 rounds? As talented as Williams is, would he possess the patience, savvy, and game plan to defeat Benitez if the defensive master was determined not to get hit? And, in Gomez-Vasquez, we're talking about the greatest 122-pounder of all-time *and* one of the most hellacious bombers at any weight in the history of the sport facing a guy who can be hit. *Ouch!*

Shields' selection in that matchup really made me chuckle. He actually picked a draw *or* "either guy by split decision." Gutsy, *eh*? Kelley copped out with a draw when forecasting Hopkins-Saad Muhammad. What's wrong with



No way would Calzaghe have survived the "Spinks Jinx"

these guys? Is Shields auditioning for the role of ambassador of Switzerland? Is Kelley running for mayor of Philly and hoping to get both Hopkins' and Saad's votes? It's just a *magazine article*, for crying out loud! Take a stand!

Misgivens: Robin Givens was on *Larry King Live* one night in March and, of course, we got to see that famous old footage of her and Mike Tyson sitting on Barbara Walters' couch. (The Tyson of that night must have been the inspiration for the Cranberries song, "Zombie.") And, son of a gun, the film clip actually got me longing for a return to the days of Tysonmania. Heck, the Klitschko Brothers robbing a bank wouldn't be half as entertaining as the Tyson of the late-'80s taking a late-night drive to Burger King.

By the way, that book Tyson is said to be writing ought to be a classic. We were always aware that no matter how crazy, out-of-control, and on the ledge "Iron Mike" was in public, there was always a whole lot more going on out of sight. Promise me a chapter on Givens, another on former trainers Kevin Rooney and Teddy Atlas, one on Don King, and yet another on the exact strategy Tyson was told to employ in the Buster Douglas fight, and I'll camp out on the sidewalk outside Barnes & Noble the night before it's released. ■

Zombie Mike on the couch with Givens and Walters

By Ivan Goldman

Arreola And Haye: What Are They Waiting For?

Young lions David Haye and Chris Arreola are both, their teams say, looking to snag a Klitschko. Talk can be cheap in this business, but I choose to believe them and applaud their spunk. Negotiations ebb and flow, and reports from the negotiators are, as usual, unreliable at best.

I have this question though: Since they're both hungry heavyweights out for glory, has it ever occurred to them that they could put on one heck of a show by fighting each other? Maybe fleetingly, I expect. Then some savvy handler explains yet again that a match between two heavyweights who actually have potential makes little business sense. One would have to lose. That would put him in quarantine, probably for years, away from the big money while the enigmatic Klitschkos recline in splendor taking one or two matches a year apiece that will keep them rich and at the top of their sorry excuse for a division.

This is an old and stupid story. Fighters who get close to the big money can't take a chance on losing. When Oscar De La Hoya was kingpin, for example, legions of potential opponents called him out but feared facing each other.

And, curiously, neither Haye nor Arreola has ever put himself on the line against any of those heavyweights with

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/GETTY IMAGES

PHOTO BY BRYAN CROW/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Haye and Arreola: Made for one another

tongue-twister names from the former Soviet bloc who've earned places in line ahead of them. You know, people like Ruslan Chagaev and Sultan Ibragimov. Sure, the young lions have excuses. Haye just moved up from cruiser. And Arreola? Come to think of it, just what is Arreola's excuse anyway? We could ask his promoter, Dan Goossen, and get a lot of explanation blarney, but the truth is, Arreola is being moved carefully. No missteps. No defeats. No top opponents. Everyone he's fought so far has been moving in one of two directions—down or nowhere at all. Has-beens and never-will-bes. By the way, I sincerely hope that's an incorrect statement. It's my fervent wish that Zakeem Graham or Thomas Hayes or somebody else who's been written off by everybody will rise Rocky-like from the ashes of obscurity, find himself an Apollo Creed, beat him into the canvas, and go on to greatness. But I won't hold my breath.

At age 28, neither Arreola nor Haye is actually so young a lion, but with Wladimir 33 and Vitali 37, the term fits, relatively speaking. Why do we care about them anyway? Just look at the pound-for-pound list. Skip all the way down to number 10, where we find kayo artist Vic Darchinyan. With the possible exception of Vitali Klitschko, there's not a heavyweight anywhere in the world who's proved himself worthy of being in the same sentence with the nasty, deadly little junior bantam from Australia by way of Armenia. And certainly not Haye or Arreola.

So mostly we care about them because they're heavyweights. They both fight hard with fan-friendly styles. They grew up speaking English, are personable, and we can pronounce their names. And Arreola, bless him, is an American and speaks Spanish too. The general public just might learn to care about them. It's been a long, long time since we had a heavyweight champion like that.

But if Chris and David keep avoiding each other *and* the eight other heavyweights in the division's top 10 who aren't named Klitschko, then they're not young lions or any other kind of lion. They're pussycats.

Tijuana Thunder: When promoter Bob Arum scheduled a March 28 show around his pay-per-view stalwart Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. in Tijuana, potential attendees asked nervously about safety issues in a place where soldiers,

PHOTO BY ALFREDO ESTRELLA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

In Tijuana, it's the police who wear the masks

police, and gunmen from rival drug cartels routinely exchange fire with automatic weapons and bodies are turning up just about everywhere. Arum fought back with a media telephone conference to "address the misconceptions about the business and safety of Tijuana."

Less than a week before the conference designed to assure us everything was hunky-dory, three beheaded corpses were found in Tijuana next to the border fence. The *Christian Science Monitor* said the death toll in TJ exceeds the one in Baghdad.

On conference day, Arum, proclaiming TJ a peachy locale, introduced Oscar Escobedo, the local secretary of tourism, who pronounced Tijuana a "very nice and safe place" and cited a January 4 newspaper article that quoted experts who agreed. But Escobedo, answering a direct question by Robert Morales of the *Long Beach Press Telegram*, confirmed that his own nephew was recently shot to death in TJ.

A February 20 State Department travel alert cited Tijuana as a place of ever-increasing violence that includes "public shootouts during daylight hours in shopping centers and other public venues." I write this just prior to the show in the hope that everything went well and everyone got home safely. But I'm just a bit wary of any boxing promoter whose advice contravenes State Department alerts.

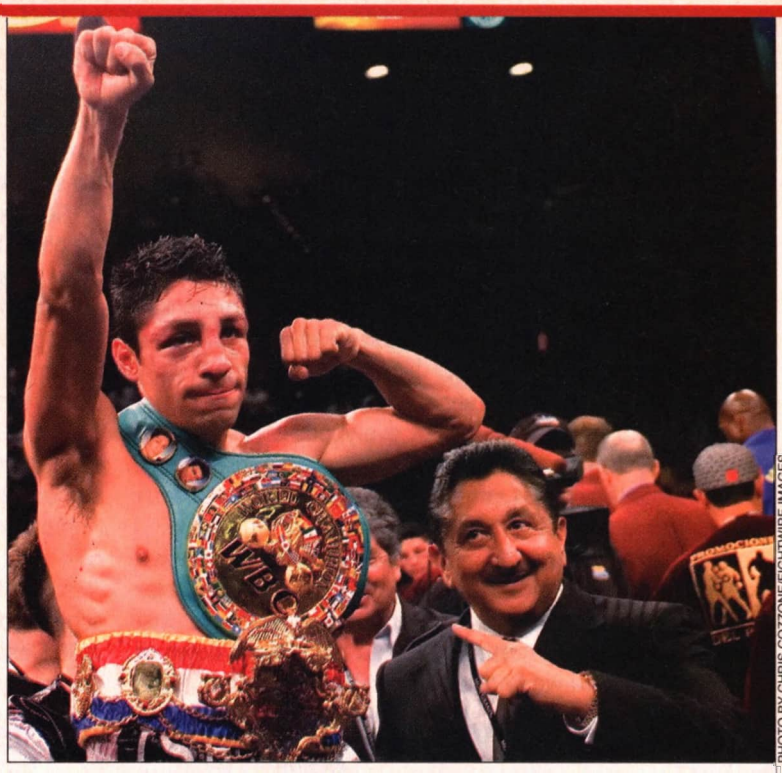


PHOTO BY CHRIS COZZONE/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Vazquez and Espinoza haven't forgotten

Forgotten Trilogy? "Juan Manuel Marquez is undoubtedly the number-one Mexican fighter in the world," his promoter, Richard Schaefer of Golden Boy Promotions, declared in a recent media conference call. Marco Antonio Barrera, Erik Morales, and Marco Antonio Margarito have all "come and gone," Schaefer said. "Marquez is the last Mexican warrior left standing."

This reminded me of those Soviet-era textbooks that claimed the Russians invented the light bulb. Yes, Marquez, arguably the number-one fighter in Mexico, is great, as he proved again against Juan Diaz, but don't his brother, Rafael, and Israel Vazquez at least deserve mention? They completed the greatest trilogy in boxing history only last year. One bout was THE RING's 2007 Fight of the Year, and another was 2008 Fight of the Year. How did all this get erased from Schaefer's memory so quickly?

So I decided to make trouble. I called Vazquez' manager, Frank Espinoza, and read him Schaefer's quote. "We all know the truth," he said. "Everybody still remembers those fights like yesterday. I guess Richard's favorable to his guy, and that's okay. The fans, the media, they all know."

If everyone were as mild-mannered and easy-going as Espinoza, the world would be a nicer place. And maybe there's some reasonable explanation. Maybe Schaefer doesn't subscribe to Showtime. Maybe those three nights he was washing his dog or stuck in traffic. Maybe.

Pay-Per-Screwed Again: Golden Boy Promotions' brilliant HBO doubleheader of Marquez vs. Diaz and Chris John vs. Rocky Juarez came hard on the heels of the mediocre pay-per-view card of Kelly Pavlik and Miguel Cotto vs. two tune-up fighters, proving once again that you don't always get what you pay for. In the first instance we got more for less, and in the second we got less for more.

Explained Todd duBoef, president of Top Rank, "Not every fight can be Cotto-Margarito, Cotto-Mosley, Pavlik-Taylor, or Pavlik-Hopkins." It's true. Tune-ups are a standard method to bring top young fighters back from a loss, instilling confidence and keeping them busy until they're ready to face stiff opposition again. In fact, if they'd gone straight into hard fights, their handlers would be accused of botching their careers. But these particular tune-ups cost TV viewers $45 (plus an extra $10 in my area if you ordered them in high definition).

"What else are we supposed to do?" asked Arum, also of Top Rank. "Tell Pavlik and Cotto that they can't fight because HBO isn't interested?" Well, you could start by talking to Showtime and ESPN, if your contracts allow it. But the truth is, there's a huge gap between HBO money and ESPN money. Purses plunge from hundreds of thousands or even millions down to not so many thousands. And Showtime doesn't want to be known as a network that takes HBO leftovers. Why should it? It gave us Fights of the Year three of the last four years.

HBO used to carry those tune-ups for select fighters, though not without complaints (Remember when Larry Merchant chewed out Bernard Hopkins on camera?). But nowadays the network seems keenly aware that it got suckered, not so much by Hopkins as by Roy Jones, who spent

PHOTO BY TOM HOGAN/GOLDEN BOY PROMOTIONS

John, Marquez, Juarez, and Diaz put on a great show—minus PPV

years taking millions from HBO while ducking worthier opponents he could have defeated but might have caused him injury.

Until over-the-air networks get smart and bring back boxing, there may not be a spot on the digital dial to place many of these tune-ups. But is it really necessary to charge so close to the $55 pay-per-view ceiling? (May it never be pierced.) I've tried to explain to these guys that they can charge less and make up the difference in volume of purchases, but they're just not ready to take my financial advice. Considering the state of my own personal finances, I can't really blame them.

Magoos: To referee Frank Santore, who made a number of bad calls favoring Kermit Cintron over Sergio Martinez, but the worst was frivolously taking a point from Martinez in round 12 that gave Magoo-winning judges Ged O'Connor and Peter Trematerra a crazy excuse to score it a draw, robbing Martinez of his victory. Only Tom Kaszmarak had it right at 116-110, Martinez. Martinez came off again as a crisp, busy fighter. It's a pleasure to watch him work.

Cintron didn't look right. It could be owing to his moving up to junior middle. It could be those two savage beatings he took from Antonio Margarito (very possibly with loaded gloves) took too much out of him. It would be a terrible mistake to ever let Margarito back into the sport. He's taken far too much out of it already. ■

PHOTO BY JAVIEL CENTENO/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Unwarranted deduction robbed Martinez of win over Cintron

Camera Clicks

PHOTO BY TOM HOGAN/GOLDEN BOY PROMOTIONS

Knowing that the Houston Rockets' mascot goes by the name "Clutch," Bernard Hopkins thought it wisest to level him with a right hand before the oversized mouse could get inside and grab on. No truth to the rumor that the man inside the costume was John Ruiz. But there was truth to reports that Yao Ming, LeBron James, and the rest of the NBA players on hand were exceedingly polite to B-Hop for the rest of the evening.

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND

This may look like a photo of The Ring *Editor-in-Chief Nigel Collins presenting Tomasz Adamek with a belt recognizing him as cruiserweight champion of the world, but what's actually happening here is that Adamek is teaching Collins a traditional Polish dance involving lots of arm-raising and finger-pointing. Judge Carrie Ann Inaba thought the pair had excellent moves, but Bruno Tonioli felt it was all a bit wooden.*

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Ace photographer Marty Rosengarten isn't just a talented cameraman; he's also the best in the business when it comes to dropping things on the floor and politely asking round-card girls to pick them up.

PHOTO BY ANDREW YATES/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

On a brisk winter day in Manchester, England, Marco Antonio Barrera was transformed into Marco Antonio Brrrrr-rera, as he bundled up to brave temperatures you don't see very often in Mexico. It's a shame Barrera couldn't wear that fur-covered hat into the ring against Amir Khan, as it probably would have prevented the enormous gash on his forehead that ended the fight prematurely.

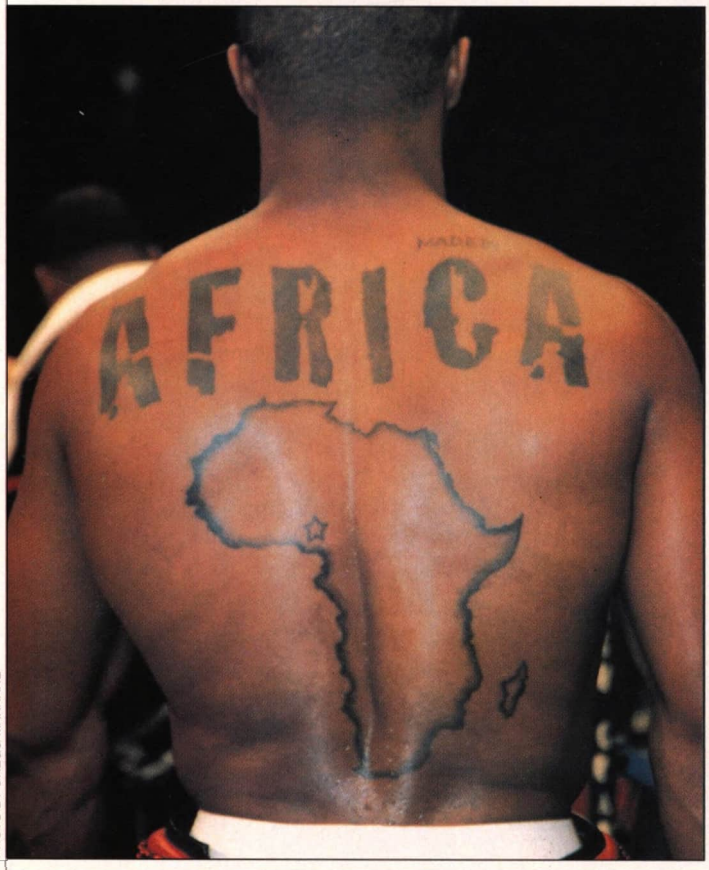


PHOTO BY GREGG MARNANE

Probably to make certain nobody thought he'd tattooed the state of Florida on his back, Ehinomen "Hino" Ehikhamenor decided to provide his own caption, explaining in big bold letters that the tat is of the continent of Africa. All we can say for sure is that his tattoo artist has to be glad that The Contender *Season Four finalist didn't ask for a tattoo of his own name, as that would have required a lot of ink and probably resulted in a mis-spelling or two.*

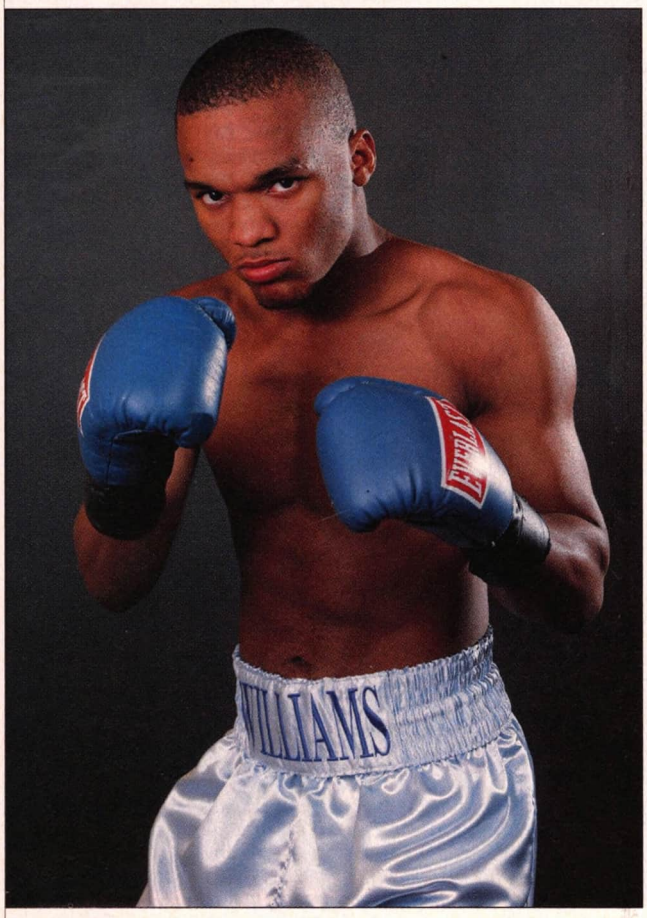
By Joseph Santoliquito
PHOTOS BY TOM HOGAN/GOLDEN BOY PROMOTIONS

Hylon Williams Jr. Junior Lightweight

Father and son would pass each other on the steps, in the living room, or the kitchen and not say a word to one another. Not even a nod. Not even a second of eye contact. There was no acknowledgement at all, because that would have meant surrender, and neither of them would budge from their stance.

The son hated what his father was making him do, so he walked with his head down, trying to make the old man feel invisible. The father would walk by proudly, head up, wrapped in the firm belief that he was doing the right thing. He knew the hostility between them would be worth it if he could stop his son from taking the same life missteps he'd taken.

Now look at the two of them: The father speaks, and his son, Hylon Williams Jr., swallows each word with rapt attention. It's hard to believe seeing the two of them together conversing that at one time they hardly muttered to each other. That was because at first Hylon Jr. couldn't stand boxing, the path his father had chosen to try to prevent his namesake and younger son, Devonte, from slipping into the netherworld of Houston's South Park, a tough neighborhood that had a habit of devouring its young.



Pro Record

2008		
April 19	Marcos Mendias, Las Vegas, NV	W 4
July 4	Ruben Calderon, Hidalgo, TX	KO 1
Aug. 1	Ramiro Torres, Phoenix, AZ	W 4
Sept. 6	Jesse Ortiz, Houston, TX	W 4
Oct. 10	Scott Furney, Tucson, AZ	W 6
Nov. 22	Ramon Flores, Las Vegas	W 4
Dec. 13	Carlos Diaz, Hato Rey, Puerto Rico	KO 6
2009		
Feb. 28	Edgar Portillo, Houston	KO 6

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DRAW	KOs
8	8	0	0	3

Today, it appears as if Hylon Jr. is heading in a direction his father always envisioned. The 18-year-old junior lightweight is 8-0 (3) as a pro and carries a maturity that belies his age, both in and out of the ring.

Growing up, Williams got two educations, one at home, from his mother, Anquentte Lake, and his father—the other on the streets, seeing friends and classmates get sucked in by fast money that often resulted in short lives, incarceration, or a crippling bullet.

Life didn't take a drastic change for Hylon Jr. until his father walked through the door when he was eight. Before then, his mother and relatives would tell him that they were going to visit dad "at work." In time, he came to understand what "work" really meant.

"My father would call and I would wonder why he wasn't coming home from work," Williams recalled.

Hylon Sr. got caught up in the street life and did five years in prison after being convicted of delivering a controlled substance. It changed his life around, and in turn changed his sons' lives too.

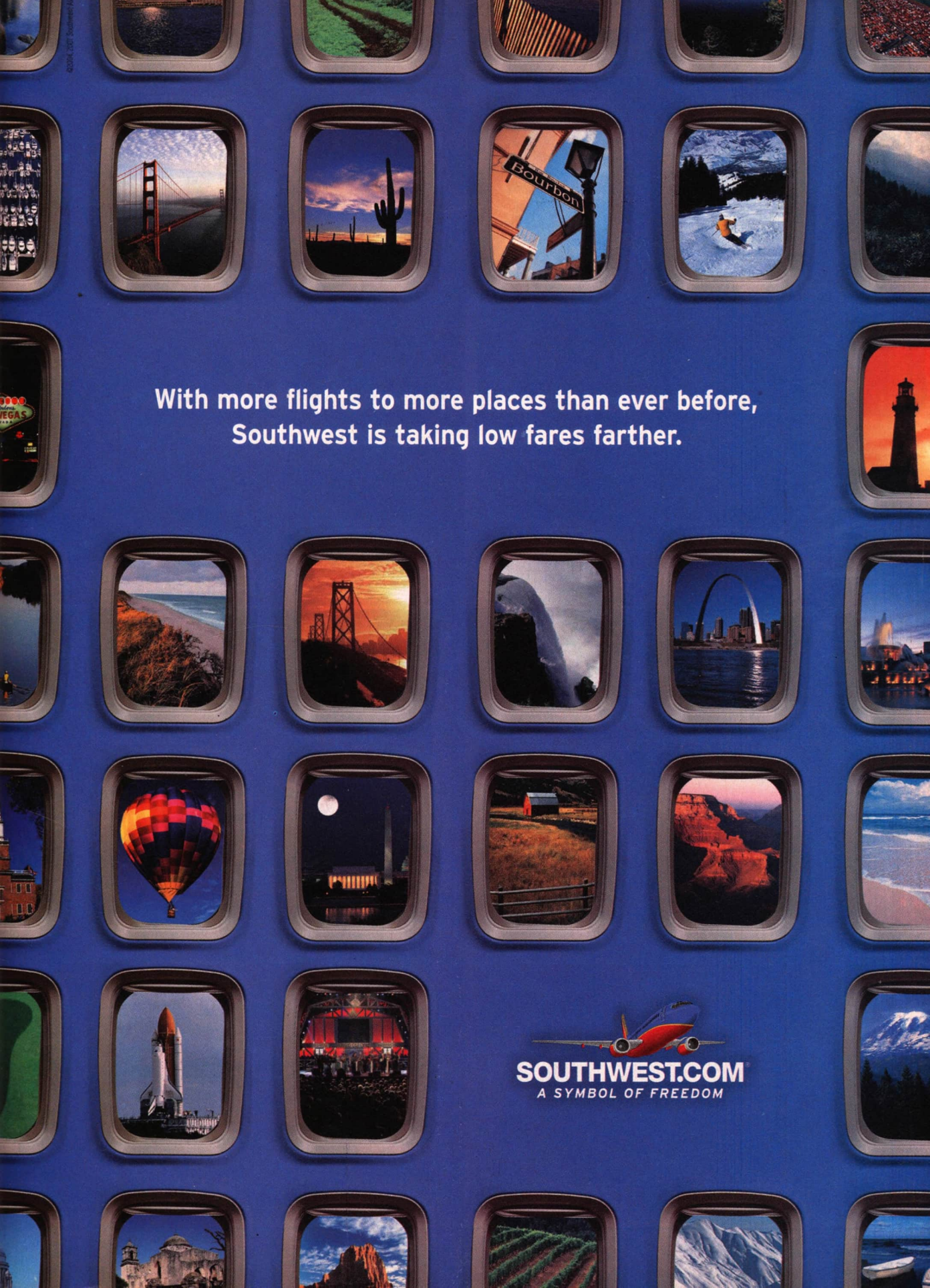
"I was just a bad kid, and the neighbors used to call me and my brother *Bebe's Kids*, from the movie, because we were always into something," Williams said. "My mother raised us to know what was right and wrong, but me and my brother needed my father. He was the one who had to teach us to be men. We lived in a bad neighborhood, and that's all we knew growing up."

That changed when Hylon Williams Sr. came home from prison.

He introduced Hylon Jr. and Devonte to boxing. It was something he did in his youth but never pursued as an adult. The streets grabbed him, but he was determined his sons wouldn't follow the same path. Still, it had taken a major scare while incarcerated to underline how much he was needed at home.

Hylon Sr. was waiting for a visit from his wife and sons, when a counselor pulled him aside and told him some startling news. "She told me Devonte was shot, and I waited for the

(Continued on Page 111)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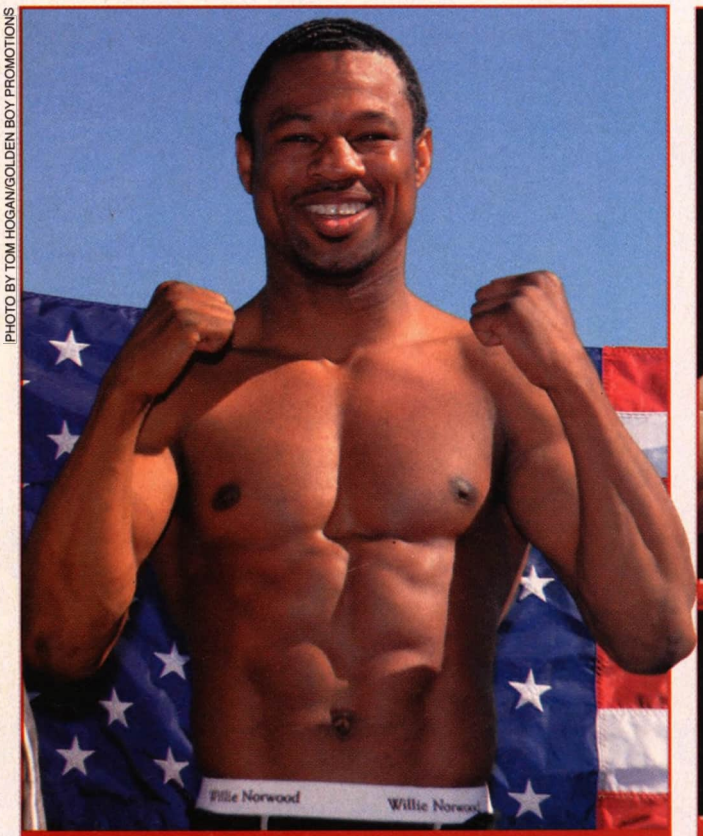
THE BEST OF BOXING'S BEST DIVISION

What We Should Expect From The Five Top Welterweight Stars

PHOTO BY TOM HOGAN/GOLDEN BOY PROMOTIONS



Shane Mosley

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Miguel Cotto

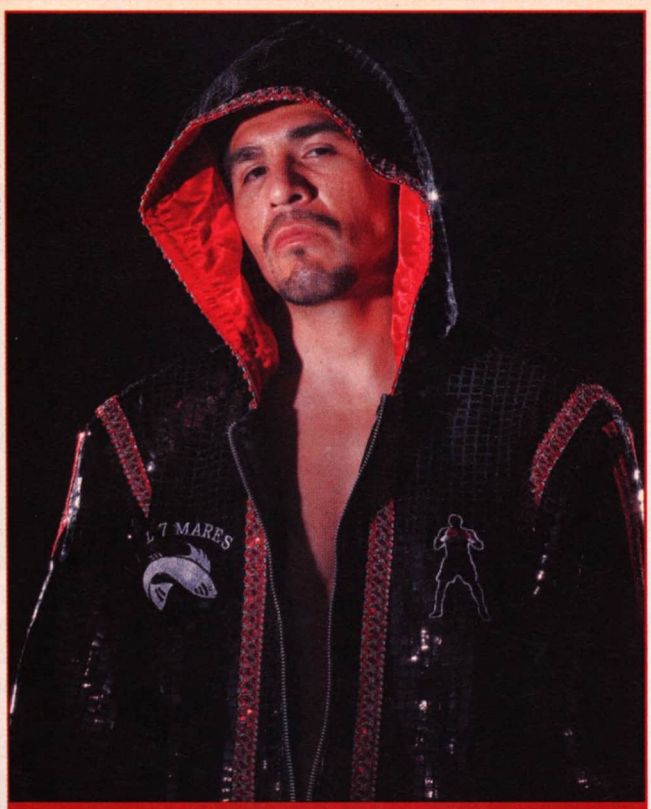


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA/TOP RANK

Antonio Margarito

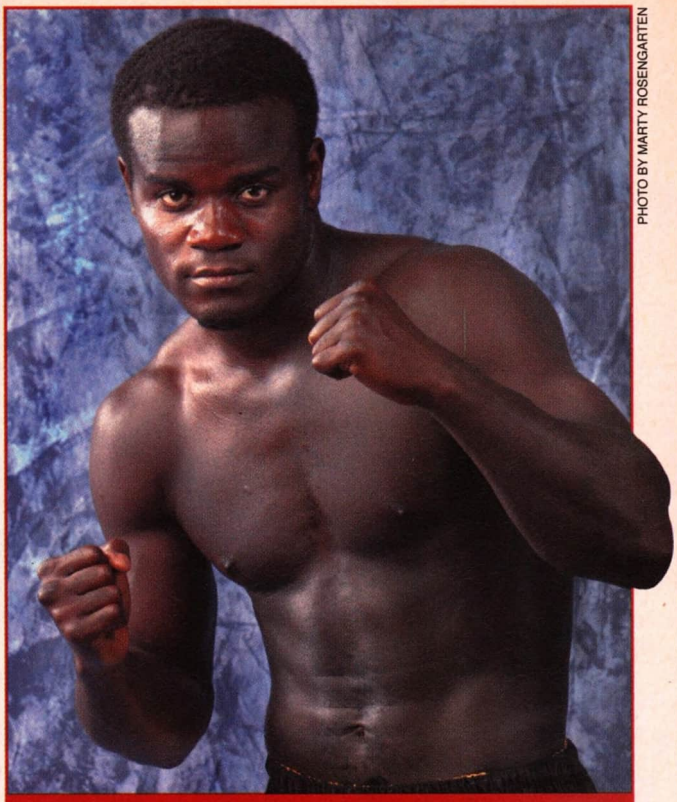


PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Joshua Clottey

By William Dettloff

Welterweights are irresistible. Fast like the lightweights and featherweights, but strong and more likely to knock a man into next week if they catch him right. There's a reason two of the greatest prizefighters ever, Sugar Ray Robinson and Henry Armstrong, did most of their best work at 147. There must be something about that size, the combination of a certain height and musculature that produces so many good athletes and memorable fighters.

Just as the heavyweight division is generally loathe to spawn higher-quality fighters and memorable series, welterweight is prone to them. Think of the eras: Jimmy McLarnin, Barney Ross, Armstrong, and Fritzie Zivic. Then Robinson, Kid Gavilan, Tony Demarco, and Carmen Basilio. Later, Emile Griffith, Benny "Kid" Paret, and Luis Rodriguez, and after that the era of the great Jose Napoles. Not long after we had Ray Leonard, Thomas Hearns, Wilfred Benitez, and Roberto Duran, and 10 years later, Oscar De La Hoya, Pernell Whitaker, Felix Trinidad, and Ike Quartey.

Today we find ourselves in yet another very good welterweight era. There are other very interesting weight classes, of course. Junior lightweight, lightweight, and junior welter each is loaded with good fighters, as is junior bantam, and any division headed up by guys like Israel Vazquez and Rafael Marquez, as is junior feather, is worth watching. But welterweight is where the real action is.

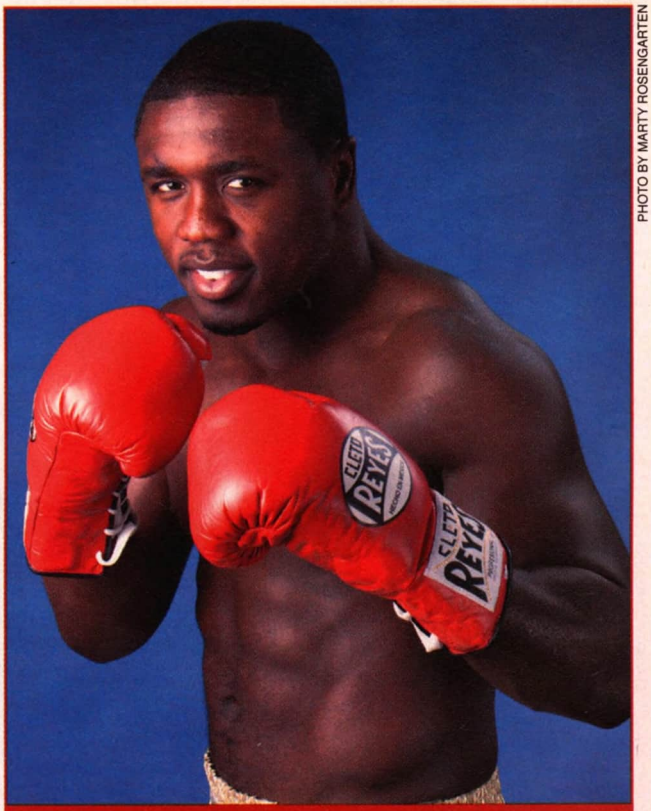


PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Andre Berto

Every style is represented. You have the resurgent Shane Mosley, still fast, still fearless, still a fighter through and through, and coming off a huge upset win. You have Miguel Cotto, part bone-crunching slugger, part methodical boxer, back in the win column after losing in one of the great slugfests of last year. There's Antonio Margarito, pressure fighter extraordinaire, whose loss to Mosley and apparent cheating have seriously damaged his reputation and standing, but whose future nevertheless remains at 147 pounds.

A little farther down are the young guns: Joshua Clottey, who gave Margarito fits when they met three years ago, a strong, stubborn puncher, and young Andre Berto, maybe the division's next big star or maybe the new Oba Carr, the young phenom who never could get over the hump and join the big guys at the top.

What follows is what we hope is a comprehensive overview of the welterweight division, provided by analyses of the five fighters listed above. For each we discuss The Good, The Bad, Who We Want Him to Fight Next, Who We Think He'll Fight Next, and Long-Range Prognosis.

Conspicuous by their absence are three of the sport's bigger names: Floyd Mayweather, Manny Pacquiao, and Paul Williams. Mayweather isn't listed because, at this writing at least, he's still officially retired. A comeback seems imminent, but as yet undeclared. He makes it official and then decides to hang around a while, the weight class becomes infinitely better, if you can stand it.

Pacquiao isn't here because his next fight is at junior welterweight and who knows where he'll go after that? Permanent residence at 147 seems possible but unlikely, despite how potent he was against De La Hoya. Williams probably could still make 147 for the right fight, but has moved on to junior middleweight and might end up a light heavyweight for all we know. He's a wildcard at 147, but not probable enough to be in a big fight to make the analysis.

So what's happening in your favorite division? Let's find out.

SHANE MOSLEY 46-5 (39)

The Good: It's never been better to be "Sugar Shane" than it is right now and we're not talking just about his recent parole, *er*, divorce. The win over Margarito was Mosley's best performance in years and the reason he is right now the hottest 147-pounder in the world.

The Bad: Regardless of how good he looked against Margarito, Mosley remains an old fighter who not long ago struggled with Ricardo Mayorga, of all people, and lost to Cotto. Also, is it possible that Margarito's style, naked wraps, and the wear from his recent war with Cotto made Mosley look better than he is? Then there's the steroid story that will just not go away (nor should it).

Who We Want Him To Fight Next: The question is who don't we want him to fight next? In a perfect world it would be Floyd Mayweather, who may

PHOTO BY TOM HOGAN/GOLDEN BOY PROMOTIONS

Sugar Shane was on-target all night against Margarito

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Cotto rebounded by manhandling Jennings

have officially ended his retirement by the time you read this. Speed against speed. Wonderful.

Who He'll Probably Fight Next: Andre Berto was mentioned prior to the Margarito fight, but Mosley's dazzling performance, coupled with Berto's close call against Luis Collazo, has probably nixed that match for the time being.

The winner of the Hatton-Pacquiao fight isn't out of the question, but we're thinking more along the lines of Zab Judah or Carlos Quintana, two top-10 guys Mosley can stay busy against and probably beat while he waits for another big fight—preferably a rematch against Cotto for the vacant RING welterweight championship.

Long-Range Prognosis: The never-ending career of Bernard Hopkins notwithstanding, what kind of long-range prognosis can there be for a 37-year-old fighter? Mosley will win another very big fight, maybe two, then catch a beating (maybe from Paul Williams) that will wrap up his career.

MIGUEL COTTO 33-1 (27)

The Good: Between his demolition of Michael Jennings and the question mark that Margarito's loaded hand wraps has planted next to all of his important recent wins, 2009 got off to a rollicking good start for Cotto. He appeared against Jennings not to have suffered any lingering damage from the loss to Margarito and remains a highly skilled boxer-puncher.

The Bad: Let's face it: Loaded wraps or not, Cotto flat-out submitted to Margarito. Can we blame him? Of course not; he was getting hammered. But now every iron-chinned puncher Cotto faces has something to shoot for. And the truly great fighters never quit.

Who We want Him To Fight Next: Cotto deserves the chance to see if he can beat Margarito when everyone knows Margarito's gloves are clean, and we deserve another great slugfest, so why not? Except for the fact that we'd have to wait for Magarito's suspension to end, this would be the perfect fight for both guys.

Who He'll Probably Fight Next: Cotto will face Clottey, June 13, at Madison Square Garden. Far more qualified and much tougher than Jennings, Clottey is just the kind of iron-chinned puncher that will test Cotto's resolve. Moreover, it's a good, fan-friendly fight that will probably come close to filling the Garden.

Long-Range Prognosis: Cotto is still young enough at 28 to qualify as being in his prime, and is too skilled and powerful not to keep succeeding at the higher levels of the game, even in this deep division. He'll be the world welterweight champion before he's through, probably within the next year.

ANTONIO MARGARITO 37-6 (27)

The Good: Margarito's gloves, even assuming they've always been loaded, didn't help him walk through Cotto's best hooks or fight Williams almost to a standstill or wade through Kermit Cintron's best right hands. He remains a world-class fighter, doctored wraps or not.

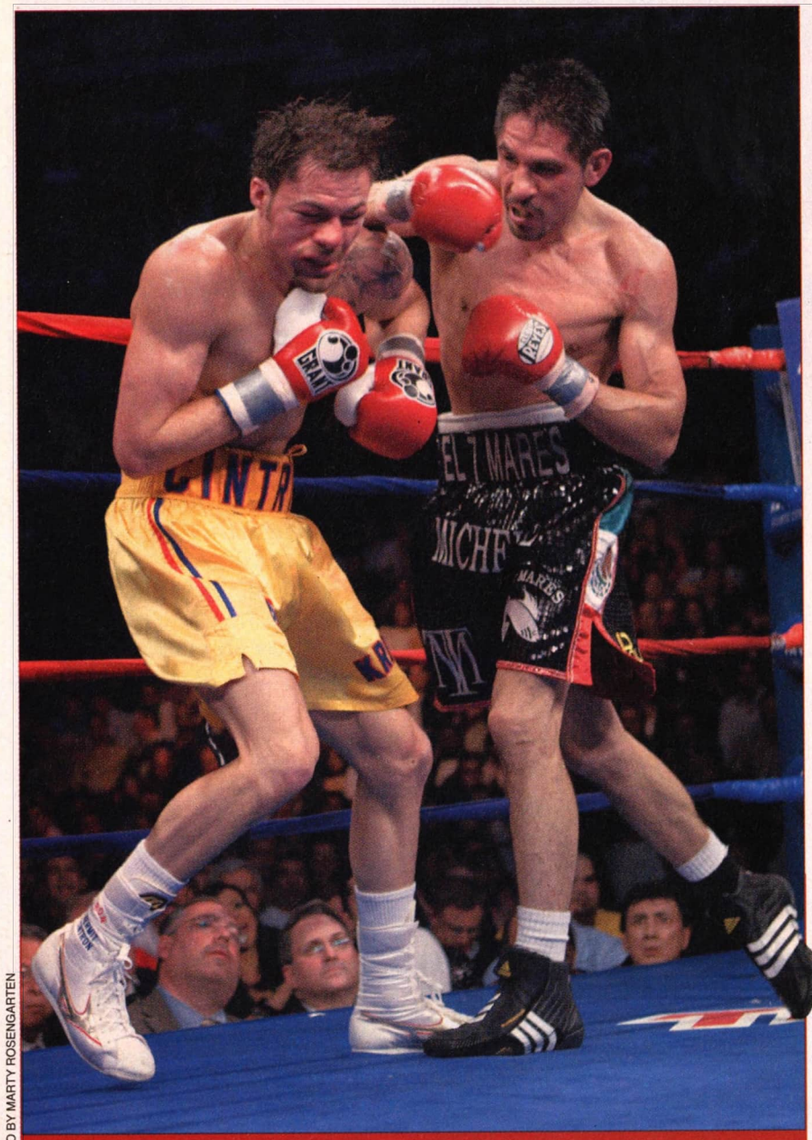
The Bad: Margarito's license was revoked for at least a year by the Califor-

nia commission, which means he won't be fighting in the United States for at least that long. His reputation, even among his Mexican fans, has taken a huge hit. Moreover, you have to wonder if the beating Mosley gave him took anything out of him.

Who We Want Him To Fight Next: The most logical fight for Margarito is a return bout with Cotto. Another win removes any doubt surrounding the outcome of the first fight, and goes some way toward restoring his credibility. If he can't beat Cotto again, but is competitive in another war, who's to say they can't have a third fight?

Who He'll Probably Fight Next: As we went to press there still was some question around whether Margarito would take a fight in Mexico, a proposition his promoter, Bob Arum, supports. But doing so probably hurts his chances of getting his license back next year. If he fights in Mexico, it will be someone on the level of Carlos Baldomir or maybe a not-ready-for primetime prospect like Freddie Hernandez.

Long-Range Prognosis: Margarito will get his license back in the United States and maybe gain back an alphabet title, but the damage to his reputation and career is irrevocable.



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Margarito clobbered Cintron twice

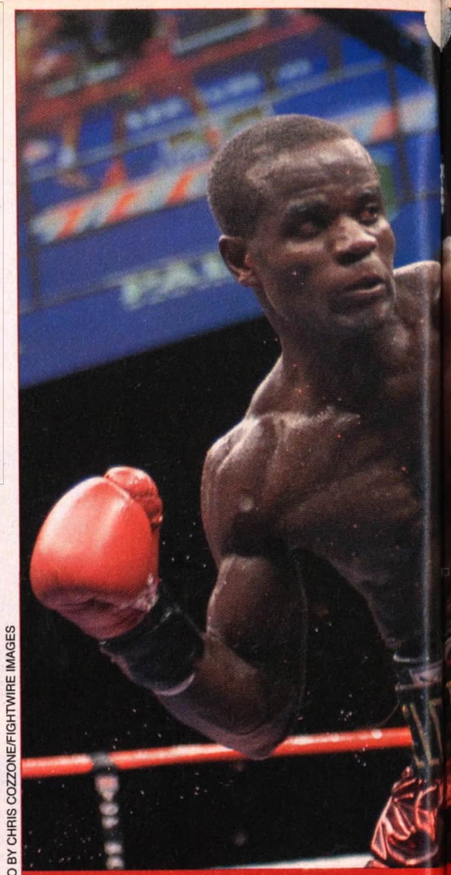


PHOTO BY CHRIS COZZONE/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

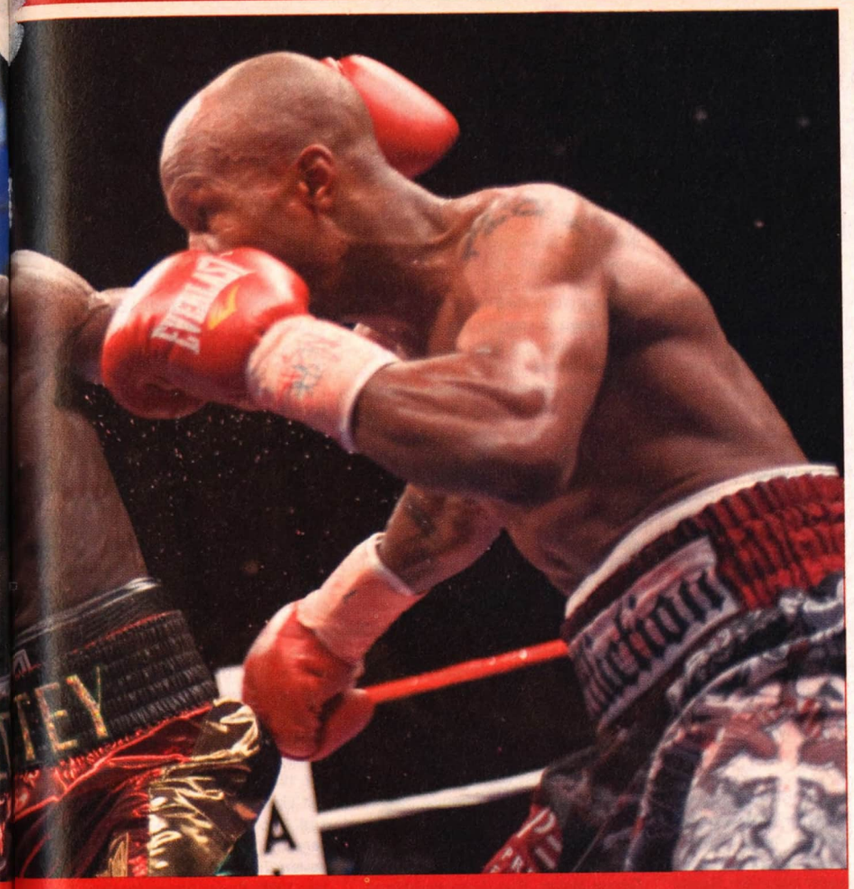
Clottey was too strong for Judah

JOSHUA CLOTTEY 35-2 (20)

The Good: Clottey is the sleeper in this division and that's not all bad. As he showed against Diego Corrales, Zab Judah, and Jose Luis Cruz, he's a rough, determined welterweight who will give anyone in the class a hard time. Remember how well he did against Margarito over the first half of their meeting in 2006? The guy can fight.

The Bad: Clottey has limitations that place him just below the division's elite. He's not as fast as Mosley, as strong as Cotto, or as relentless as Margarito. He does everything pretty well, but isn't the package that are the guys ranked ahead of him. Also, he can be passive and lose his concentration over the course of a long fight.

Who We Want Him To Fight Next: How about Berto? It's an excellent test for both guys. A victory by Clottey effectively closes the door to anyone rated behind him, and the styles match up very well.



Who He'll Probably Fight Next: Clottey is set to face Cotto on June 13 in a fight that could very well elevate his career or relegate him to the also-ran category, at least for the time being. It is also a chance to redeem himself after having fallen apart against Maragrito three years ago.

Long-Range Prognosis: Clottey can remain an alphabet titleholder for about as long as he wants, provided he doesn't tangle with the very best guys in the division. In most other divisions he'd be world champ, but in this one, at this time, probably not.

ANDRE BERTO 24-0 (19)

The Good: Berto's demanding win over Luis Collazo last time out proved Berto isn't just prodigiously gifted physically, he also has a fighter's heart. He fell behind early but made adjustments, wore Collazo down, and finished strong to take a close decision.

The Bad: Collazo hit Berto cleanly whenever he threw punches, rattled him at least twice, and made it abundantly clear that Berto is not yet a finished product, despite owning an alphabet belt. Moreover, plenty of viewers felt Collazo deserved the decision.

Who We Want Him To Fight Next: How about Judah? Despite his myriad deficiencies, he remains a top-10 guy and still flashes some of the fastest hands in the game. If Berto can get by him, it would go a long way toward putting him among the elite, and if he loses, we'd know he was never meant to get there. As a bonus, both guys are quick and have heavy hands.

Who He'll Probably Fight Next: The close call against Collazo will almost certainly convince Berto's brain trust to slow things down a bit. We expect his next fight will come against a much softer guy—someone like Said Ouali or Saul Alvarez.

Long-Range Prognosis: Berto is hungry enough and physically talented enough to hang with the very best guys in the division, winning some, losing some. We don't see him netting the world title anytime soon or getting to the Hall of Fame some day, but he will leave his mark. ■

PHOTO BY SCOTT FOSTER/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Berto battles back to beat Collazo

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A GREAT WIN, BUT TOTAL SATISFACTION ELUDES MARQUEZ

"I Won't Think I'm The Best Until I Beat Manny Pacquiao"

By Joseph Santoliquito
PHOTOS BY CHRIS COZZONE/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Juan Manuel Marquez' eyebrows curl inward and resemble two tiny rams charging each other. His eyes squint into the size of black pebbles and a distorted scowl takes control of his facial features. It's a look that would scare the devil himself. Friends, family, and anybody Marquez ever played sports with know it—but nobody knows it better than the men who share the ring with him.

"I know the look," THE RING lightweight world champion said, laughing. "I know it well. I don't have a name for it, but my friends call it 'the assassin look,' or 'the face of few friends.'"

The most recent adversary to see that look up close was Juan Diaz, who Marquez vanquished in nine thrilling rounds on February 28 in front of 14,571 fans at the Toyota Cen-

Referee Rafael Ramos moves in to stop the fight after lightweight champion Juan Manuel Marquez knocked down Juan Diaz a second time in the ninth round. Although the hometown hero lost, the 14,571 fans in attendance saw a sensational struggle that enhanced Marquez' reputation as one of the very best fighters in the world.

Bull rush: Diaz got off to an excellent start, immediately going after the champ and punching him into the ropes with powershots from both hands. Marquez was rocked a few times, but never went down and gradually fought his way back.

ter in Houston, Texas. It was the first defense of the lightweight championship he won by knocking out Joel Casamayor in September 2008, and the back-to-back victories over such highly regarded opponents has elevated Marquez' status to that rarified realm where only a handful of boxing superstars reside.

But this is all still new to Marquez. He has spent most of his career as an afterthought, a peripheral figure on the outside of big-money fights against Naseem Hamed, Marco Antonio Barrera, and Erik Morales during a great featherweight era. Marquez was always the odd man out. The twist today is that Marquez, at 35, is stronger than ever, while Hamed is retired, Morales is mulling an ill-advised comeback, and Barrera is a postscript.

More importantly to Marquez, however, is that the average Mexican fan sitting in the upper deck doesn't need four beers to imagine they see a little of themselves in him. Marquez came from the same dirt-poor background they did. Those are his people, his fans, some of whom have supported him throughout his arduous journey to the pinnacle. The big difference is that they are rapidly growing in number.

With fellow Mexican Antonio Margarito shelved for at least a year after receiving a beatdown from Shane Mosley and a license revocation from the California State Athletic Commission for attempting to load his gloves prior to the Mosley fight, Marquez is the touchstone of Mexican fighters.

Despite the painfully slow arch of his career, Marquez wasn't about to be swallowed by adversity or anything else that stood in his way. It is his mental toughness that sets him apart. It's the way Marquez has always been, and he gives a simple explanation as to why.

"I don't like to lose," said Marquez, through interpreter Eric Gomez of Golden Boy Promotions. "It really is that simple. I don't like to lose. I'm the world's worse sore loser. You see that look, the look you call the 'El Diablo look,' that comes from when I was a kid playing in the streets, regardless of what I played. You can go back and see pictures of me as an amateur or when I played other sports, I had that same look on my face."

Marquez then recounted a story of his youth. He was 12 years old, competing in a Mexican national tourna-

Marquez' Dazzling Diaz Destruction

The prefight buzz was that Juan Manuel Marquez seemed ripe to lose, that the 35-year-old world lightweight champion would show every bit of his age against the naturally larger 25-year-old Juan Diaz, who would be fighting in front of his hometown fans. And for the first few rounds, it looked like those predicting an upset were right. "The Baby Bull" took the fight to Marquez, pounding away with left hooks and straight rights that sent the defending champion reeling backward, especially in the first three rounds.

"Diaz came at me strong and it's something we knew and prepared for," Marquez said. "We knew he was going to come right at us and that eventually we'd get him."

It took some time, but by the fourth round, Marquez, 134½, began noticing something: Diaz' work rate was starting to decrease and, even more importantly from a technical standpoint, he kept leaning forward after he threw a punch, leaving the middle wide open for a counter attack.

"I kept yelling at him to use the center of the ring, use the center of the ring and throw the uppercut when Diaz leans like that," said Nacho Beristain, Marquez' trainer. "In the fourth and fifth rounds, you started to see Juan Manuel do that, and we started to see some results."

Gradually, the patient Marquez began hammered away, using accurate punching to cleave Diaz' defenses and turn the tide of the fight. Both fighters were cut, Marquez suffering a gash over the right eye in the fifth round and Diaz getting opened up with an uppercut in the eighth. Marquez, 50-4-1 (37), was also making Diaz miss, sometimes blocking or ducking four- and five-punch combinations. It was something that might have gone unnoticed in the upper reaches of the arena, but up close it was obvious Marquez was giving far more than he took.

In the ninth, with blood flowing over his right eye, Diaz, 134½, valiantly tried to hold off Marquez, but it was to no avail. A right hand to Diaz' temple was the culmination of a five-punch flurry that sent Diaz reeling face down, through the bottom rope, and almost out of the ring.

Diaz, 34-2 (17), courageously got back on his feet, though he looked decidedly unsteady. A few seconds later, a beautiful right uppercut downed Diaz for good, knocking him flat on his back. Referee Rafael Ramos (USA) didn't even bother counting, waving it off at the 2:40 mark of the ninth.

"I couldn't see out of my right eye," Diaz said. "I got caught with a good punch. There was nothing I could do. I thought I was ahead by a round or two, but the cut hurt me and the blood was dripping into my eye."

After eight completed rounds, the fight was dead even on the official scorecards, with Max DeLuca (USA) seeing it 77-75 in favor of Marquez, Duane Ford (USA) 77-75 for Diaz, and Levi Martin (USA) having it 76-76. But Marquez' scintillating finish rendered all arithmetic academic.

—J. S.

Marquez slams home a right

ment. He had done well the first day, he recalled, beating an opponent he was supposed to beat. The next day, it became more difficult. Marquez outboxed his opponent but wasn't given the decision, much to his chagrin and the dismay of everyone watching (a portent to the disappointments that followed as a pro in Marquez' controversial losses to Freddy Norwood, Chris John, and Manny Pacquiao).

"I'd had it, so I quit. I thought I won that fight and got ripped off," Marquez recalled. "I did quit, and after three days I came back. Everyone around

me convinced me I had to come back, that there were bigger things ahead of me in boxing if I stayed with it.

"Oh, yes, I remember that experience, because it made me stronger. That loss made me train harder than I ever trained before. I was determined that something like that would never happen again. I'll admit it: I'm a sore loser. I didn't cry then or throw things around, but do remember I almost cried that time. There were many other times after I lost that I did cry."

It didn't matter whether it was soccer, baseball, or American football, Marquez *had* to win. He was a terror on himself and his teammates. Perhaps the best example was the weekend pickup games of "two-hand touch" football.

"We'd play without pads and I hated being tackled," Marquez said. "I don't know if Nacho [Beristain, Marquez' trainer since he began boxing] knew I was playing, because I was around 15 to 19 years old playing tackle football on cement. That's the way we played. It would start out as a touch football game, but people would start arguing and yelling at each other, and before you knew it, everyone was tackling each other. I think that's where the warrior in me came through, playing sports as a kid. That's where that look comes from."

For a long time Marquez was among the most avoided fighters in the game. He waited two years as a mandatory for Hamed and received nothing in return for his patience. Morales wanted no part of him, telling Top Rank's Bob Arum that Marquez "wasn't at his level." Marquez stalked a prime Barrera for years, before catching up with a faded version in March 2007. When Marquez lost the controversial decision to John in Indonesia in 2006, he was banished to boxing's broom closet.

"I'm more content, but this hasn't been easy for me," Marquez said. "I had a lot of ups and downs. It was a long climb. I wasn't getting the opportunities and it was frustrating. You work so hard, and most in cases that hard work pays off. It didn't for me. I'm in a good place right now, but I never lost sight and never lost the desire to be the best."

Throughout much of his career, Marquez' technical, counterpunching style was not particularly popular with Mexican fans. But in recent years he has developed a more aggressive way of fighting, and this exciting, risk-taking conversion has increased his fan base and appreciation for his marvelous skills.

"At this moment, Mexicans look at Juan Manuel Marquez as the best of

The fight turned in Marquez' favor when he began to split Diaz' guard with uppercuts, one of which opened a cut over his left eye. Marquez' subtle defensive technique also played a major role the second half of the fight, as many of his challenger's punches failed to connect.

the best out of all Mexican fighters, though I don't think he's where Julio Cesar Chavez was," said Salvador Rodriguez, boxing writer for *Record Sports Daily*, based in Mexico City. "Juan Manuel himself will tell you that Chavez is still a Mexican icon, but I would put Marquez over Barrera and Morales. They haven't achieved what Marquez has achieved. Marquez is the kind of fighter who doesn't fight too much in a typical Mexican style. But he's become a warrior to the Mexican people and to fans all over the world."

"I've changed a bit," Marquez said. "I had a style that boxing purists loved, of hitting and not getting hit. It's a style that worked for a while, but now my new style gives boxing fans their money's worth. I want them to want to watch when I fight. I think more fans like the way I fight now. I do get hit more than I ever have, and obviously, I don't like to get hit. But you have to consider that I'm fighting better opposition. I've tried to combine things, using the old style and the more aggressive style."

It has certainly worked well. No one has been on a more impressive streak than Marquez. Besides knocking out Casamayor and Diaz, he won a comprehensive decision over Rocky Juarez in 2007—a victory even more impressive in light of Juarez' hard-fought draw with John on the Marquez-Diaz card—and dominated Barrera. It's a streak unmatched by any top-10 pound-for-pound fighter.

In fact, an argument can be made that Marquez is actually the best pound-for-pound fighter today, despite being listed behind Pacquiao in THE RING's pound-for-pound ratings. It is a point of view that HBO ringside analyst Max Kellerman is happy to articulate.

"I wouldn't say Marquez is in anyone's shadow anymore," said Kellerman. "Pacquiao's greatest distinction was beating an Oscar De La Hoya many considered shot, and I wouldn't say David Diaz was among the top three lightweights. Here you have Marquez beating Casamayor and then he takes on the second-best lightweight in the world and knocks him out clean. Juan Diaz was a bigger, younger, more-in-his-prime fighter, and Marquez knocked out. What's the guy have to do?"

In Marquez' mind, it's simple: Vanquish Pacquiao.

The constant thought that Pacquiao got the better of him drives his competitive juices and is the reason why Marquez openly says he shouldn't be considered an all-time great right

PHOTO BY TOM HOGAN/GOLDEN BOY PROMOTIONS

Marquez watches Diaz crash down face-first for the first of two ninth-round knockdowns. The fight was even on the official scorecards going into the round, but Marquez was clearly pulling ahead with his relentless assault and pinpoint punching.

Agony and Ecstasy: Referee Ramos calls off the fight with Diaz still flat on his back, while Marquez climbs the ropes and flexes is muscles. Even though he was fighting in Diaz' backyard, the fans cheered the champion's breathtaking performance.

now. To Marquez, Pacquiao defines his standing.

"That's why I say I still think I have a lot of work to do," Marquez said. "I beat a very good fighter in Diaz, but I still think I can take it to another level. I won't think I'm the best until I beat Manny Pacquiao. That's still a thorn in my side and I want more than anything to have my arm raised after a fight with Pacquiao. That's what I think will satisfy me. Manny Pacquiao is still on my mind. I've accomplished so much in my career that I'm somewhat satisfied, but I think I was robbed the first two Pacquiao fights. I want to be free and clear of that Pacquiao thorn."

It remains to be seen if Marquez ever obtains a third fight with Pacquiao, but if he does, the offensive brilliance he used to dismantle Diaz will certainly come in handy.

"Marquez threw combinations I never saw before, combinations that are almost impossible to throw," HBO blow-by-blow announcer Jim Lampley said. "How can you see the punches coming from those angles? And Marquez was doing it accurately and in such rapid-fire succession. Miguel Cotto could approximate something like that, but not with Marquez' hand speed. Some things Marquez does, you have to ask yourself if you can see anyone else right now in the sport being able to do that. He's become much braver and shown much greater faith in his chin. He's definitely a better offensive fighter than he was before."

Thanks to his recent run of outstanding wins, Marquez has made himself an integral part of any discussion from 135 to 147 pounds—boxing's money pit. After years of toil in search of recognition, he's poised to cross over. And although he yearns for another Pacquiao match, Marquez stressed that he won't play Captain Ahab to Pacquiao's Moby Dick. He believes he has other choices.

"Floyd Mayweather is the next step, I want Floyd," said Marquez after hammering Diaz into defeat. "The only reason Pacquiao is there at number one is because Floyd retired. I want Floyd. It would be a great event, a great challenge."

One ardent supporter of a Marquez-Mayweather confrontation is Golden Boy Promotions President Oscar De La Hoya. "It's a fight that makes sense," De La Hoya said. "Sure, some people may say Mayweather is too big for Marquez, but Marquez keeps proving people wrong, like he did against Diaz. The fact is Marquez is a threat, and Mayweather doesn't like threats."

Whether or not a fight with the currently retired Mayweather is a realistic proposition is another matter. If Pacquiao beats Hatton in their May 2 superfight, there would be more money in a Pacquiao-Mayweather fight than a Marquez-Mayweather fight, so Marquez will probably have to look elsewhere for his next opponent.

In the meantime, Marquez will take some time off and spend it with his family, but he knows once the gloves go back on, his I'm-going-to-kill-you look will emerge again.

"Play me in anything physical, basketball, baseball, soccer, and you'll get that look," Marquez said, laughing again. "But you're pretty safe with board games." ■

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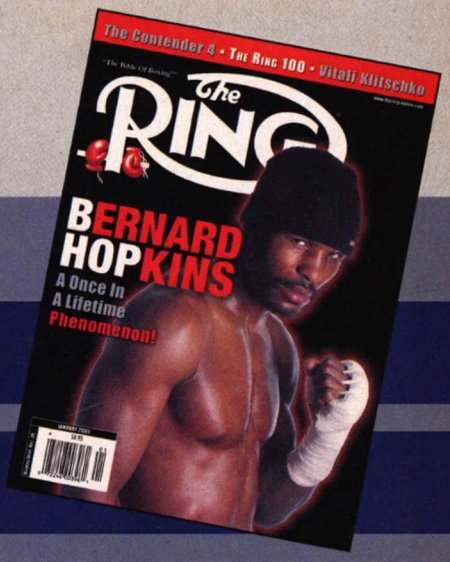

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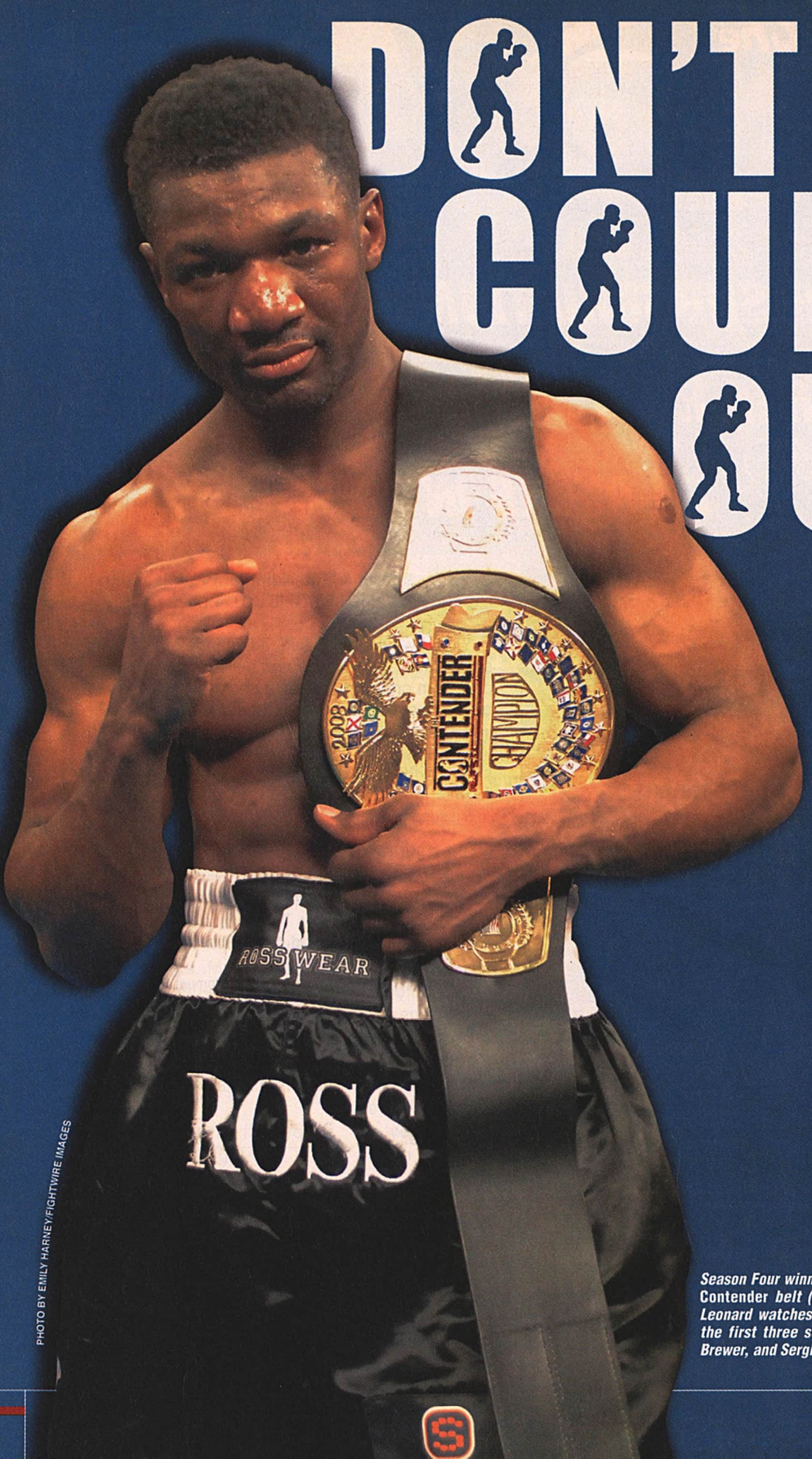


PHOTO BY EMILY HARNEY/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Season Four winner Troy Ross poses with his Contender *belt (left), as original host Ray Leonard watches along with the winners of the first three seasons: Sakio Bika, Grady Brewer, and Sergio Mora (right).*

After Four Seasons, The Show Still Serves A Purpose

THE CONTENDER

By Don Stradley

Fight nights were always amusing at Foxwoods. If the main event featured a New England fighter, plenty of townies would trek up from Providence, Brockton, and even Hartford, where the great Willie Pep sold newspapers before he became a world champion. There would also be retired couples enjoying a night out at the fights, and young people who wanted the casino experience without the grime of dirty, old Atlantic City. The place may have lacked the heat of other, more famous fight palaces, but Micky Ward's sisters made enough noise for everybody.

A look around Foxwoods' new MGM Grand Theater on the night of *The Contender* Season Four finals showed a slightly different

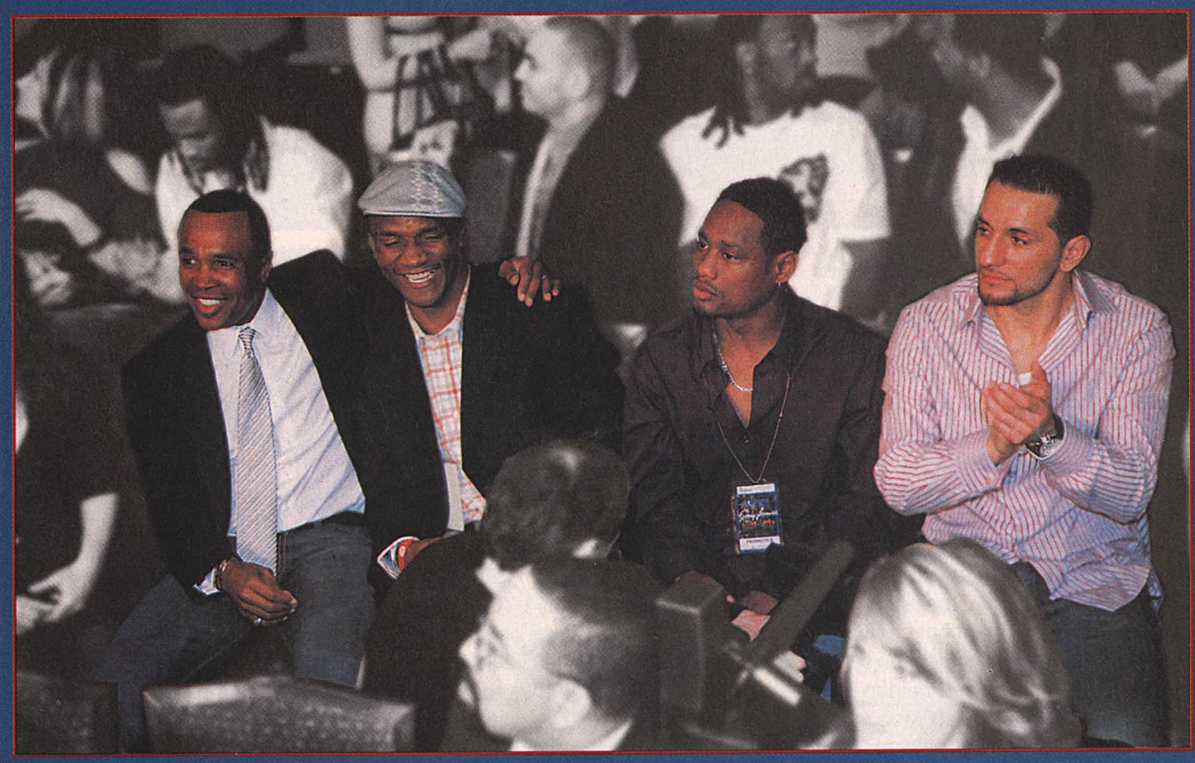


PHOTO BY GREGG MARNANE

PHOTO BY EMILY HARNEY/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Ross, a two-time Canadian Olympian, bangs a right hand into the side of Ehimomen Ehikhamenor's head. Southpaw Ross tallied two knockouts with his left hand during his three previous* Contender *victories, but his right did most of the damage in the final.

crowd. It was a gathering of TV watchers and celebrity gawkers that wouldn't know Manny Pacquiao if he hit them in the throat. For many, it was their first live fight. They wouldn't be there if not for *The Contender*.

Wheezing and tired after four seasons on three different networks, *The Contender* caravan rolled into Mashantucket, Connecticut, on February 25 with hopes that Troy Ross and Ehinomen "Hino" Ehikhamenor could deliver something like last season's war between Sakio Bika and Jaidon Codrington. That was probably too much to expect, but Ross and Ehikhamenor were likeable cruiserweights with brickhouse physiques that bulged with the promise of action.

Ross, a two-time Olympian, has a look that harkens back to fighters seen in history books. Hollywood noticed this; Ross' movie credits include *Cinderella Man* and *Resurrecting The Champ*. Most recently he portrayed Floyd Patterson in *Phantom Punch*, an upcoming biopic of Sonny Liston. He's even peddling his own line of clothing. But Rosswear aside, the Canadian southpaw is a beast of a fighter.

At one point, while Ross and Ehikhamenor were trading blows in round three, Ross' face twisted into a frightful snarl that seemed to say, *Whatever lives in you is not as mean as what lives in me, and my demons will push me to win this whole shooting match*. Poor Hino. He came into the ring sporting a map of Africa tattooed on his back. By the fourth round, after being tagged by a planet-shaking right hand, Ehikhamenor stumbled into the ropes and turned away, leaving Ross with nothing to look at but Africa. Ross began swinging while Ehikhamenor hugged the top rope for security. This went on until referee Steve Smoger stopped the bout. Ehikhamenor pro-

tested, but if he viewed the tape he would see that his body language was not encouraging.

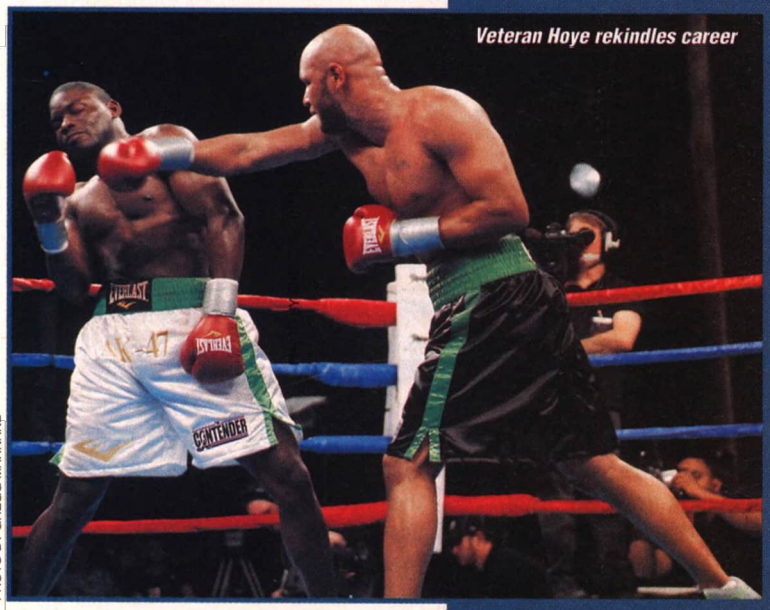
Ross now joins Sergio Mora, Grady Brewer, and Bika as *Contender* tournament winners. But Ross has won at a time when things are drastically different than when the show debuted in 2005.

There's a feeling among some that *The Contender* has seen better days. Venues for *The Contender* are shrinking—Season One climaxed at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Season Four finished at the tiny MGM Grand in Connecticut. Attendance for Season Three's Boston final was nearly double that of Season Four's. More shrinkage:

Veterans' Valhalla

Although the word "contender" puts one in mind of a young fighter on the way up, the show has been a godsend for veterans. Aside from Sergio Mora, the winners have all been well into their careers, and even some of the veterans who fell short, such as Stevie Forbes, have benefited. This could be because the vets are savvy enough to handle their younger opponents and hungry enough to grab for the prize money. That was the case in Season Four. Troy Ross, though, may have an advantage over veteran winners Bika and Brewer, in that they were known commodities. Ross, even though he's 33, is still a relatively fresh face. The feeling that he's just been discovered may help him.

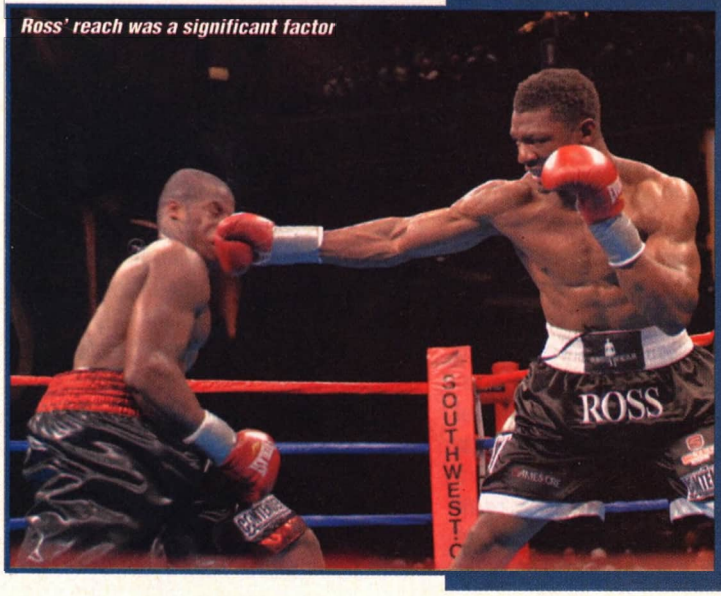
Ross, 21-1 (15), Toronto, Ontario, needed a couple of rounds to get his timing down against Ehinomen Ehikhamenor, 15-4 (7), Queens, New York, by way of Nigeria. The fight's early moments were awkward, with Ross, 194, chopping with a right jab that kept falling short. Ehikhamenor, 192, started trading shots with Ross in the third, but just as things were heating up, the end came suddenly in round four, with Ross battering Ehikhamenor along the ropes until the bout was stopped at the 2:00 mark.



Veteran Hoye rekindles career

PHOTO BY GREGG MARNANE

Ross was one of the more exciting competitors on *The Contender* Season Four. His wins over Felix Cora (KO 1) Lawrence Tauasa (KO 2), and Akinyemi Laleye (W 5) were the work of a man who'd been waiting for his moment to shine. After suffering a number of professional setbacks, including fight cancellations, Ross retired in 2005. He spent much of his inactive time giving tips to younger fighters in a Toronto gym and working with a Toronto group that assists abused children and single parents. Ross is from a boxing family. His father represented Guyana in the 1968 Olympics, and Ross' cousin, Edgarton Marcus, represented Canada in the 1988 Seoul Games. Winning *The Contender* tourney may or may not be the career boost he imagines it to be, but Ross is a welcome addition to the 200-pound mix, where his four consecutive victories on the reality TV show earned him the number-nine position in THE RING cruiserweight ratings.



Ross' reach was a significant factor

PHOTO BY EMILY HARNEY/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Rico Hoye was another veteran making the best of his time on *The Contender*. Laleye, 12-3-1 (6), St. Petersburg, Florida, who also originally came from Nigeria, hoped to wage an inside battle against Hoye, 23-3 (15), Detroit, Michigan. Laleye, 194, wobbled Hoye twice in the opening stanza and pressed him nonstop, but Hoye, 199, proved to be the crisper puncher, hurting Laleye several times down the stretch.

Judges Tom Kaczmarek, Jack Reiss, and Clark Sammartino turned in identical scores of 79-72 for Hoye.

—D.S.

PHOTO BY GREGG MARNANE

When Ehikhamenor turned away and hung over the ropes in the fourth round of a scheduled 10-rounder, referee Steve Smoger had no choice but to stop the fight. The New York-based Nigerian simply couldn't hang with the heavy-handed Ross.

The show originated on NBC; it's now on Versus. Mora's Season One triumph won him a million dollars; Ross earned $150,000. Granted, that's a nice payday, but *Deal Or No Deal* offers more prize money and you don't have to fight four guys to get it.

The Contender's Executive Producer Jeff Wald doesn't feel the show is slipping and he blames the current economy.

"It's hard to secure sponsorships," Wald told THE RING. "We're on a new network and there wasn't as muchs buildup. But it's not just us. General Motors has cut sponsorships everywhere. The Academy Awards, the Super Bowl, everything."

Forget Sylvester Stallone and TV mogul Mark Burnett. The show's chief mouthpiece and spiritual guide has always been Wald, an "entertainment entrepreneur" since the 1970s. With typical élan, he added, "Ross never saw that kind of money in his life. Besides, what these fighters get from *The Contender* is more important than a million dollars."

Wald was referring to something that was available to fighters not that long ago, but now seems out of reach: TV time.

"These guys got 12 weeks of television. To do that on HBO would take four years," Wald said.

If Wald reminds us of anyone, it would be Colonel Tom Parker, the carnival impresario who managed Elvis Presley and described their relationship by saying "a starving dog always remembers who feeds him." Wald, of course, is not as unscrupulous as Parker (and he's yet to find an Elvis), but by giving fighters publicity, he's gained their loyalty. Most of us would prefer a million bucks, but for these fighters, exposure is like a drug. At some point they may realize that being recognized in airports doesn't always translate into making money, but for now they love the spotlight.

"I was fighting on Showtime. I was ranked number one in the world, and fought for a light heavyweight championship," said Rico Hoye, who defeated Akinyemi Laleye on the Foxwoods undercard. "I don't think I got as much attention and publicity. Being ranked number one, and then being on the show, the two don't even compare. This is, hands down, the best." Laleye joyfully agreed. "A world champion doesn't get this much exposure. They took 16 unknowns and turned them into household names." Ross likened his victory to winning an Olympic gold medal.

Despite the good feelings of the participants, the show's fourth season, taped in Singapore, earned very little attention from major boxing news outlets. The Internet press has gone from openly criticizing *The Contender* to ignoring it. Worst of all, the scant number of writers in the press row at Foxwoods barely paid attention to the fights, preferring to amuse themselves with on-line poker. At times the evening felt like a small-town beauty pageant where the only people in attendance are the contestants' relatives.

Still, Foxwoods officials seemed satisfied with how *The Contender* performed. It was Ash Wednesday, after all, in the dead of winter, and Connecticut has been socked hard by economic woes. A walk down any street in nearby New London revealed dozens of boarded up businesses and "For Sale" signs. *The Contender* was the debut boxing show at the new venue, a slick, 4,000-seater built for acts like Jerry Seinfeld and Whoopie Goldberg. Although Foxwoods employees were overheard joking that many of the 3,600 in attendance had taken advantage of the $10 tickets made available to the staff, Wald insisted the night was a success and

PHOTO BY GREGG MARINANE

Contender ***host Tony Danza interviews Ross following his belt-winning victory. How much his success on the TV show will help Ross' career remains to be seen, but he's certainly in a better position than before. Ross likened his victory to winning an Olympic gold medal.***

there will be more "*Contender* brand" shows in Foxwoods' future.

Versus has made no official statement, but according to Wald, ratings were strong enough to warrant a fifth season. This comes as a surprise, for despite the Singapore setting, much of Season Four felt flat. Wald also admitted that some recent *Contender* events have lost money, but he's confidant the brand will grow in influence.

"It's a new business era. We're establishing a relationship with Golden Boy Promotions; we have a lot of plans," he said.

In Wald's mind, the lack of Internet coverage is a non-issue when you have a host like Tony Danza appearing on network talk shows to hype the tournament. Even the growing number of alphabet belts play into Wald's strategy. "The show promotes the fighters, and then the fighters promote the show by winning titles," said Wald, pointing to the minor belts won by Mora and Bika.

In many ways, Wald mirrors the American mainstream: He's not interested in fighters under 135 pounds, he likes knockouts, and he's a boxing fan but not an expert. He stands by the show's simple credo of choosing articulate, friendly fighters who work hard, and no thugs. The wholesome approach is ironic, for *Spy* magazine once referred to Wald as "a legendary wild man—even by Hollywood standards." As the former husband/manager of Australian pop star Helen Reddy, Wald was tabloid fodder for years. Perhaps his stormy career has prepared him for *The Contender*, a show that is always on probation and always having to prove itself.

"The show touches a raw nerve," Wald said, still shilling days after the season had ended. "I've had women tell me they cry because they like both fighters and don't want to see a guy get hurt. Now, that's fandom. That's what we've created. It's the only reality show that's real."

A fifth season would be good news. It would mean 16 unheralded fighters would get the all-important exposure. It would also means that boxing, even in the worst of times, can still create a type of fandom. But Wald and company should understand that boxing, perhaps more than any other sport, walks hand in hand with its own past. Singapore was an interesting experiment, but America has many cities with rich boxing histories. The show is ripe for a season in Philadelphia, New York, or Detroit, places that smell like boxing, places that tug at the sleeve of how it used to be. ■

Don Stradley is a freelance writer from Massachusetts and a regular contributor to THE RING.

Jack Dempsey, And The Ameri

The Draft, can Dream

By Ron Felber

There is a story told by legendary sportswriter Grantland Rice about Jack Dempsey that says much about the man and the society he epitomized. It seems that on a wintry afternoon in 1931, Rice stopped by the '21' Club in Manhattan where he ran into the elder Dempsey and then-heavyweight contender Max Baer, who had dropped a close decision to Tommy Loughran the night before in Madison Square Garden.

Baer, an infamous character in his own right, was bitterly complaining, "Lefts, lefts, lefts, that's all the guy threw all night!"

"Yeah," agreed Dempsey, who had refereed the contest, "but you could have stopped him in the first round if you played it right."

"What are you talking about, Jack?"

"Stand up," he demanded, "and I'll show you."

With that Baer stretched up his 6'3", 220-pound frame, took off his jacket, and the two men faced off.

"Go ahead, throw the left lead just like Loughran did last night."

And so the mighty Baer shot out a stiff jab, only to have the former champ drive a huge right fist into his left biceps with paralyzing force.

Immediately, Baer recoiled, "Jesus, Jack, you broke my goddamned arm!"

"I'll show you another punch," said Dempsey, spinning the larger, younger man halfway around, then laying into him with a lethal left of equal fury that sent the world's number-one heavyweight contender reeling backward with a yelp of pain.

"You can't do that," Baer protested. "It's illegal!"

"They'll only warn you the first time," Dempsey growled, downing the glass of whiskey that sat on the tabletop, pupils dilated to needle points, eyes black as coal.

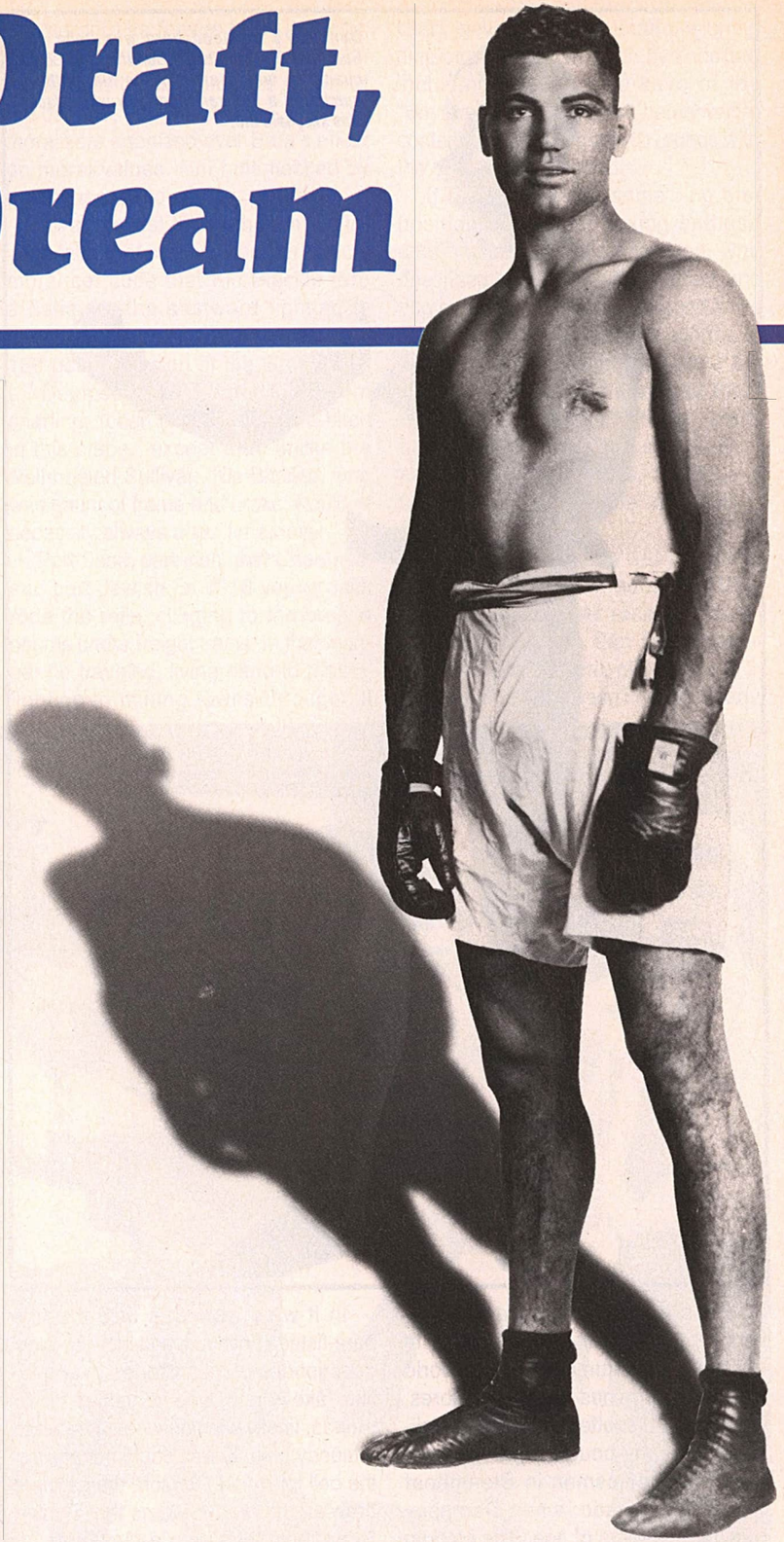
During earlier times, back in the mid-1890s, in the cramped cabin where Dempsey's father, Hyrum, and mother, Celia, raised Jack, his four brothers, and two sisters, a wooden plaque hung on the barren walls bearing the words of Scottish social critic Thomas Carlyle:

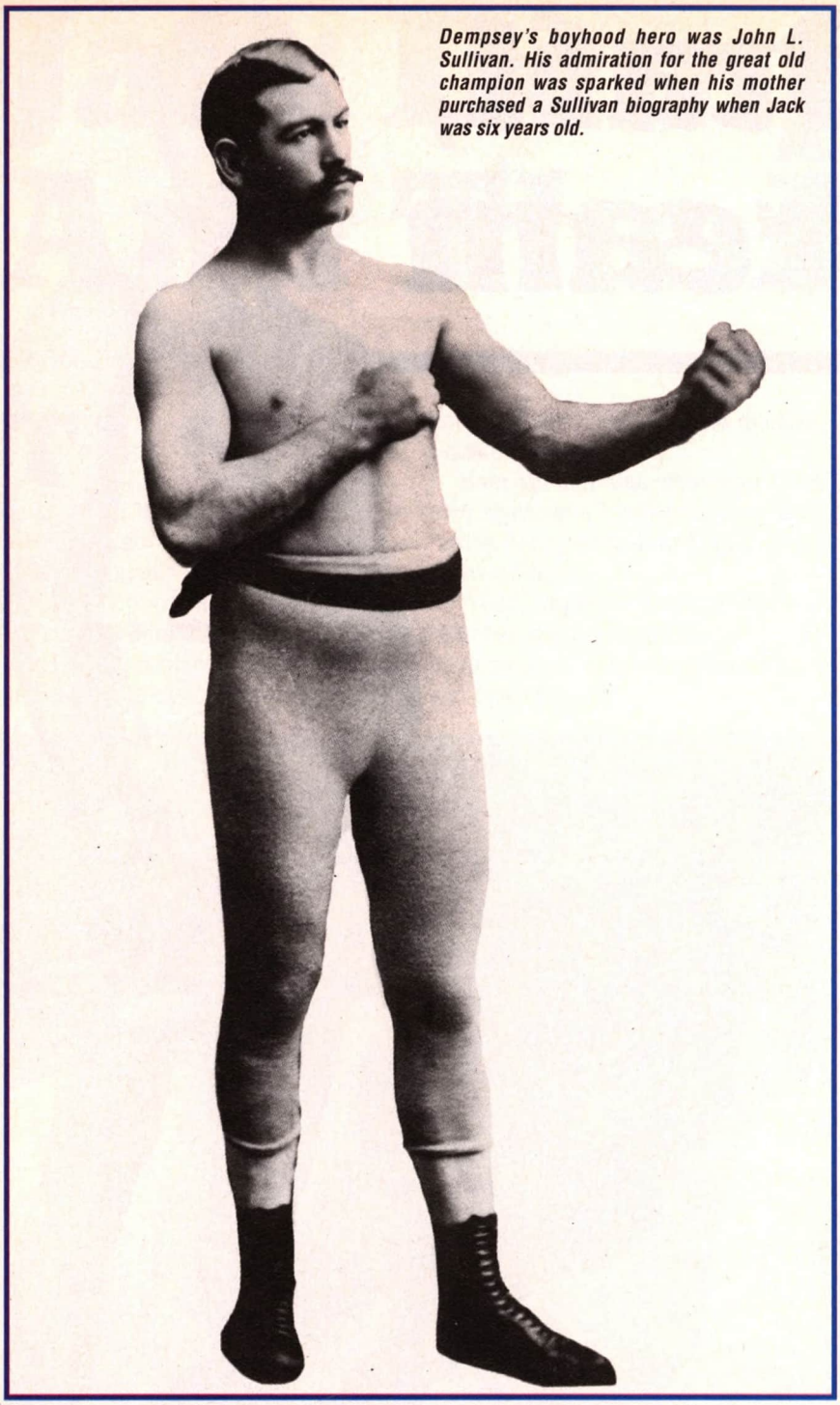
"Make yourself an honest man
And then you may be sure
There is one less scoundrel
in the world"

This unlikely maxim must have echoed poignant in the heart of young Dempsey as his no-luck father trekked, one boomtown to another, in search of employment. Still, if Carlyle's words offered advice without sustenance, at

PHOTO BETTMAN/CORBIS

Maxine Cates Dempsey pictured with Jack and his manager, Doc Kearns, in a rare undated photograph. Dempsey married Cates in 1916 and divorced her in 1919. In 1920, she was the government's star witness in Dempsey's infamous draft-dodging trial.





Dempsey's boyhood hero was John L. Sullivan. His admiration for the great old champion was sparked when his mother purchased a Sullivan biography when Jack was six years old.

least there was one rung amidst the vacuum that Jack could hold on to in that rough-and-tumble cowboy world of faux silver mines, saloons, whores, violence, and shattered dreams: a solitary biography bought by Celia from a traveling salesman in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, when Dempsey was just six years of age, *The Modern Gladiator, John Lawrence Sullivan, Samson Of The Prize Ring.*

In it were accounts of Sullivan's bare-fisted knockouts and blow-by-blow descriptions of his victories over men like Jake Kilrain, who he battled for 75 rounds, finally winning when, beaten to a bloody pulp, Kilrain could not answer the bell for round 76. More than a mere brawler, the reader learns the "Boston Strongboy" was also a classicist. "If he has been reported at times quoting ancient Greek," the anonymous author reports, "there is nothing surprising in it since Boston scholars can do that as naturally as they take to beans."

Dempsey's mother later confided that she believed even then that Dempsey was fated to be a boxer because he could not hear enough about the "Great John L." These were stories, both chivalrous and chilling, at once elegant yet violent to the bone. In one, Sullivan defends a cripple bootblack from a "drunken loafer." After the boy had polished the villain's shoes, the writer reports, the man berates him for his clubfoot and ragged clothes, and refuses to pay. The heavyweight champ, hearing all he can stand, lifts the cad from his chair by the throat, pins him against the wall, then smashes his nose to a "pulverized hollow" with a single punch before ordering him to pay four times the normal rate.

The amalgam of desperate poverty, brute force, and romanticism on which Dempsey was reared was more than an experience; it was a recipe for that period in American history. "Has there ever been a fighter quite like Jack Dempsey?" author Joyce Carol Oates wondered in her 1993 book *On Boxing*. "Here was the very embodiment of hunger, rage, the need to do hurt; the spirit of the Western Frontier come east to capture his fortune."

During the period 1910-1915, after the young Dempsey had left the Mormon town of Manassa, fighting under the name of "Kid Blackie," nine million immigrants had, like a massive wave, rushed onto the shores of the United States, re-shaping not only its politics and economics, but changing its culture forever. In 1913, industrialist Henry Ford perfected the assembly line, modeled on the so-called "process line" pioneered by the oddly disparate Singer Sewing Machine Company and Colt Firearms. Ford's innovation was that his process never stopped, yielding the capacity to turn out 160,000 cars per year, roughly 11 cars per worker.

Modern efficiency at the expense of workers, and the new immigrant population, in particular, would not be limited to industry alone, however, and two years later, in 1915, a German scientist named Fritz Haber developed

a horrifyingly effective way to kill that could not have been less individual. Bombs containing poison gas dropped in trenches at the Russian front from zeppelins during World War I eradicated hundreds of thousands. Trapped in long, deep trenches, men and rats alike died in slow agony.

Strangely, as if operating in a parallel universe, life in the United States carried on near giddy with the largesse of untold wealth amassing in the hands of a miniscule fraction of the country's population, while others starved—the disparity rationalized by a financial theory called "trickle down" economics. In 1910, as the drums of war sounded a continent away, songwriter Irving Berlin became a millionaire based on "Alexander's Ragtime Band," a tune that redefined popular music and American culture at the same time. In film, while Max Senett's Keystone Kops performed their zany madcap, actress Theda Bara shocked moviegoers with her star turn as *femme fatale* in *A Fool There Was*. "Kiss me, you fool," she demanded in the come-on scene of the decade. For the next five years, as moralizers agonized over Bara's effect on moral values, film fans flocked by the thousands to see her pictures.

It was amidst this dichotomy of in-your-face materialism and puritanical moral certitude that Kid Blackie tore a fistic swathe eastward fighting in dancehalls, barges, and alleyways. A 160-pound version of the Great John L., Dempsey would enter a barroom snarling, "I can lick any son-of-a-bitch in this place," except that, unlike the well-heeled Sullivan, Kid Blackie, who was gaunt of frame and broke, would of necessity always add, "for a dollar."

Part Scott, part Irish, part Cherokee, and part Jewish, in 1916 young Jack rode the rails, clinging to the breach beams under freight trains. In that manner he traveled, living hand-to-mouth, fighting in mining towns throughout Utah, Nevada, and Colorado, winning nine straight bouts, seven by knockout including a first-round kayo of the "Boston Bearcat," a black heavyweight contender who had gone 10 rounds with the great Sam Langford.

If Dempsey's fearsome ring disposition impressed boxing enthusiasts, including Damon Runyon, who described him as "savage of attack and ring bearing," Jack's rugged good looks must have been at least as alluring to women who knew something about the world. Most prominent among them was Maxine Cates, a hardboiled, pretty brunette, 16 years his senior, who played piano in Maxim's, a Salt Lake City saloon, where she also turned tricks as a prostitute.

The young Dempsey was no stranger to whores, as his manager, "Doc" Kearns, would later recall, "When I found Dempsey in San Francisco in 1917, he was a moral, physical, and financial wreck. He wasn't eating steady.

Dempsey shakes hands with 6'6" Fred Fulton prior to their July 1918 bout in Harrison, New Jersey, which Dempsey won via first-round knockout. The victory put "The Manassa Mauler" in line for a shot at heavyweight champion Jess Willard.

Dempsey and his crew hit the road while training for the Willard fight in Toledo, Ohio. This photo was taken about a week before the fight, which took place in a stadium erected especially for the event.

He couldn't hold a job. He'd been so broke in Salt Lake City that he went out on the street to find guys for Maxine. Whatever he says now, he sure as hell did pimp for his own wife. I taught him boxing tricks. I showed him how to throw that good left hand. Hook off the jab, the double hook. I got him going, but before I came along, he was a bum."

In the spring of 1917, three weeks before America entered World War I, Dempsey tore into a string of rousing performances that began his march toward a championship match against gigantic Jess Willard. The next year, he won 21 of 22 bouts, 11 of them by way of first-round knockout, but his success was set against a troubling counterpoint. Channeled by a loud propaganda campaign led by stalwarts like Theodore Roosevelt, war fever swept the country. Sauerkraut was renamed "liberty cabbage," dachshunds were called "victory pups," and children sang songs about hanging the Kaiser.

Informed Americans understood there were enormous profits to be made in banking for warring nations and in the manufacture and sale of munitions, but after Congress enacted the Espionage Act of 1917 and later the Sedition Act, it became dangerous to discuss. These laws forbade "disloyal" language about "the flag, armed forces, uniforms, Constitution, or politics of the American government." Swarms of district attorneys and judges enforced them like zealots. The eminent socialist Eugene Debs went to prison for objecting to the draft, convicted of sedition. A woman in Kansas drew a 10-year sentence for writing a letter that denounced "war profiteers." After poet Robert Frost's sister, Jean, made an anti-war speech, an angry mob chased her from a platform, beat her, and then threw her into a New Hampshire lake where she nearly drowned!

The Selective Service Act, known as the draft, became law on May 16, 1917. That month, Jack Dempsey, like millions of others, dutifully filled out his draft questionnaire. He claimed that his father, Hyrum, his mother, Celia, his widowed sister, Effie, and her three children relied on him for support. Additionally, on Doc Kearns' instruction, he listed Maxine, his wayward bride, as a dependant based on the law that stated that if a man was the principal supporter of his family and if his induction would impose hardship on them, he was exempt from military service.

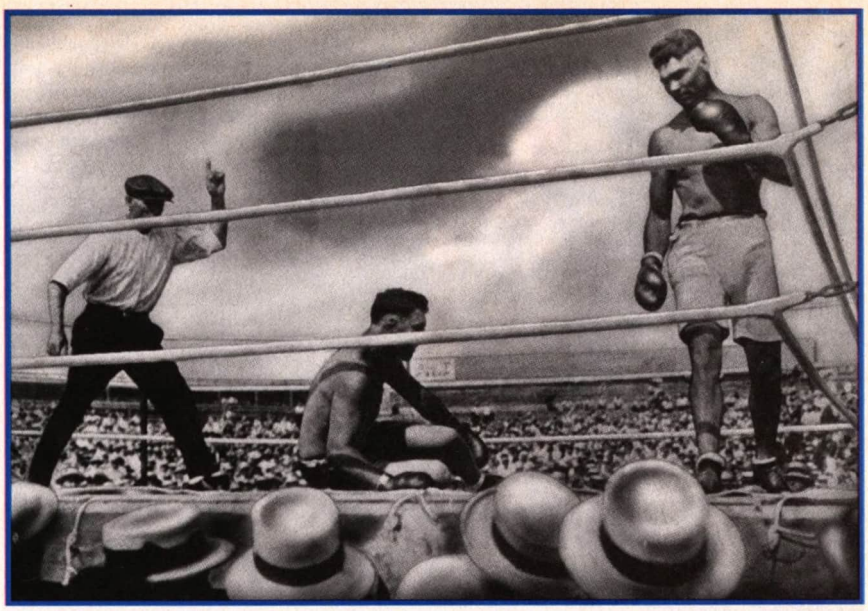
Fifteen months later, Dempsey tried, without success to enlist in the Navy, but not before his wily manager staged a series of public relations photos showing his fighter working in wartime shipyards, a pair of high-gloss-patent-leather dress shoes showing beneath his work pants. This was a mistake for which Dempsey would pay dearly, but as Prohibition was ushered into law by groups like the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and gangsters like Al Capone transformed bootlegging into a multimillion-dollar industry, even news of an armistice ending World War I was driven off the front page of newspapers by the announcement of the Dempsey-Willard championship bout.

Willard, who had clubbed controversial black champion Jack Johnson to the canvas after 20 bruising rounds, was considered unbeatable. As the boxing axiom goes, "A good big man will always beat a good small man," so the oddsmakers viewed Willard as the favorite. Willard stood 6'7" and weighed 245 pounds while Dempsey was 6'1" and weighed only 187. Still, in Dempsey there was something sullen and volcanic that seemed best described in jungle terms by sportswriters at the time. Comparisons to a "stalking tiger," adjectives like "ferocious" and "killer" were the way he was depicted, so that, along with the 60 wins and 43 knockouts he brought as credentials into the fight, the prospect of a historic upset helped lure 19,650 paying customers into the Toledo, Ohio, outdoor arena constructed by promoter Tex Rickard for the bout.

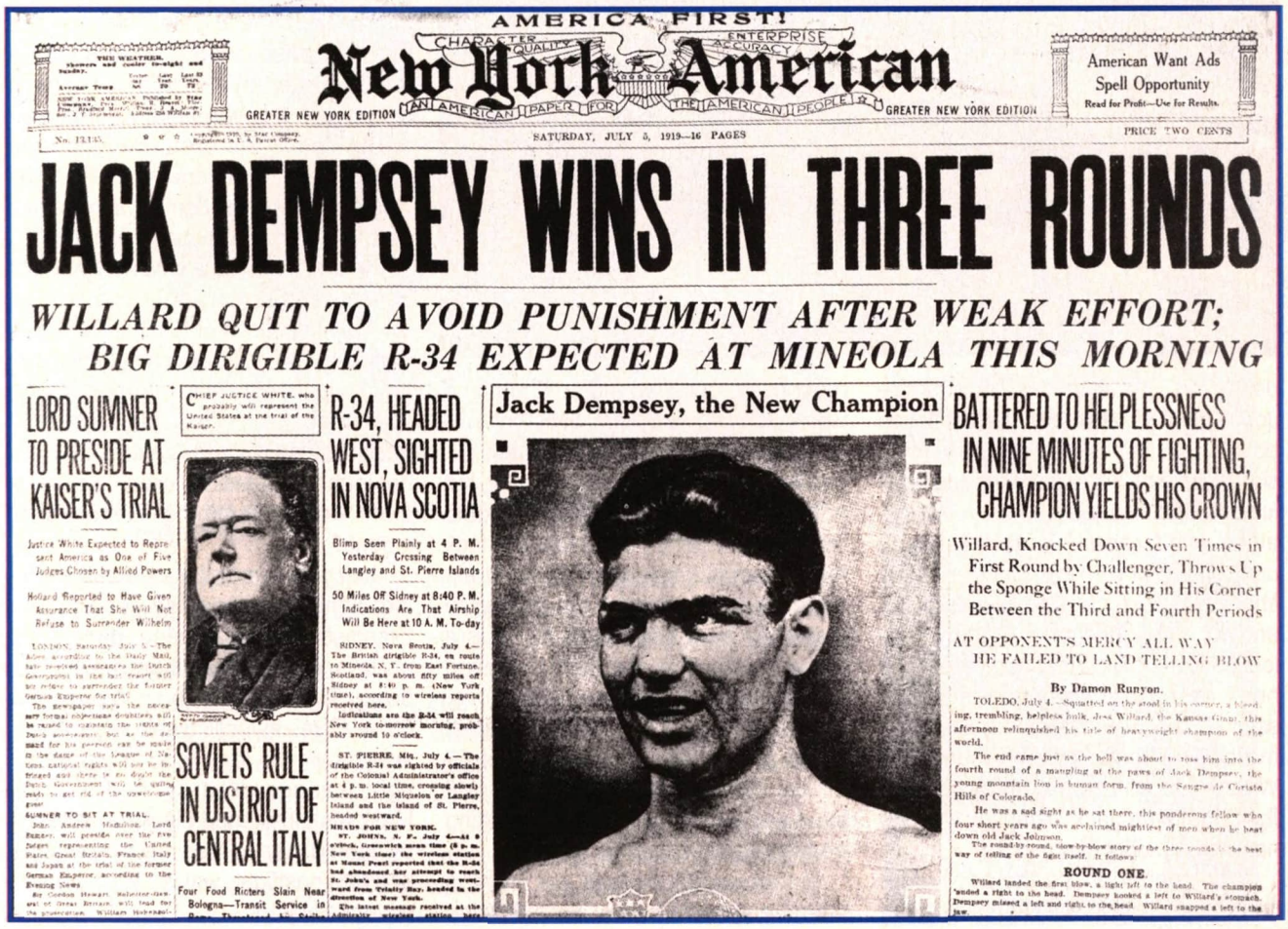
Entering the ring on the afternoon of July 4, 1919, Dempsey may have been outweighed by 58 pounds, but his physical appearance was awesome. The leather-like quality of his skin was accentuated by a deep purplish tan. The sides of his head had been shaved, giving the impression that it was too narrow for his heavily muscled body. Lastly, instead of the normal boxing robe, Dempsey wore an old black, wool cardigan, a leftover from his mining days. When the 24-year-old fighter clashed with the giant Willard, the outcome was not predictable, but fated.

The first minute of the fight was slow, Dempsey bobbing and weaving, showing Willard the utmost respect, suddenly sprang inside the champion's guard landing a stunning five-punch assault. The first four blows—two lefts and two rights—landed solidly to Willard's body, the final punch, a devastating left hook, connected squarely with the right side of the champion's face and he collapsed to the canvas. Beating the referee's count, the moment Willard stood upright, Dempsey was all over him, raining vicious lefts and rights from every angle until, pinned against the ropes, Willard was knocked down a second time.

By the end of the third round, the gutsy but overmatched champion was



Dempsey's savage knockout of Willard (above) was front-page news across the United States (below), but the new champ's popularity was soon under attack from many quarters, including legendary sportswriter Grantland Rice.



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No. 13,135. SATURDAY, JULY 5, 1919—16 PAGES PRICE TWO CENTS

JACK DEMPSEY WINS IN THREE ROUNDS

WILLARD QUIT TO AVOID PUNISHMENT AFTER WEAK EFFORT; BIG DIRIGIBLE R-34 EXPECTED AT MINEOLA THIS MORNING

LORD SUMNER TO PRESIDE AT KAISER'S TRIAL

Justice White Expected to Represent America as One of Five Judges Chosen by Allied Powers

Holland Reported to Have Given Assurance That She Will Not Refuse to Surrender Wilhelm

LONDON, Saturday, July 5.—The Allies, according to the Daily Mail, have received assurances the Dutch Government in the last resort will not refuse to surrender the former German Emperor for trial.

The newspaper says the necessary formal objections doubtless will be raised to maintain the rights of Dutch sovereignty, but as the demand for his person can be made in the name of the League of Nations, national rights will not be infringed and there is no doubt the Dutch Government will be quite ready to get rid of the unwelcome guest.

SUMNER TO SIT AT TRIAL.

John Andrew Hamilton, Lord Sumner, will preside over the five judges representing the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan at the trial of the former German Emperor, according to the Evening News.

Sir Gordon Hewart, Solicitor-General of Great Britain, will lead for the prosecution. William Hohenzol-

CHIEF JUSTICE WHITE, who probably will represent the United States at the trial of the Kaiser.

SOVIETS RULE IN DISTRICT OF CENTRAL ITALY

Four Food Rioters Slain Near Bologna—Transit Service in

R-34, HEADED WEST, SIGHTED IN NOVA SCOTIA

Blimp Seen Plainly at 4 P. M. Yesterday Crossing Between Langley and St. Pierre Islands

50 Miles Off Sidney at 8:40 P. M. Indications Are That Airship Will Be Here at 10 A. M. To-day

SIDNEY, Nova Scotia, July 4.—The British dirigible R-34, en route to Mineola, N. Y., from East Fortune, Scotland, was about fifty miles off Sidney at 8:40 p. m. (New York time), according to wireless reports received here.

Indications are the R-34 will reach New York to-morrow morning, probably around 10 o'clock.

ST. PIERRE, Miq., July 4.—The dirigible R-34 was sighted by officials of the Colonial Administrator's office at 4 p. m. local time, crossing slowly between Little Miquelon or Langley Island and the island of St. Pierre, headed westward.

HEADS FOR NEW YORK.

ST. JOHNS, N. F., July 4.—At 9 o'clock, Greenwich mean time (5 p. m. New York time) the wireless station at Mount Pearl reported that the R-34 had abandoned her attempt to reach St. John's and was proceeding westward from Trinity Bay, headed in the direction of New York.

The latest message received at the Admiralty wireless station here

Jack Dempsey, the New Champion

BATTERED TO HELPLESSNESS IN NINE MINUTES OF FIGHTING, CHAMPION YIELDS HIS CROWN

Willard, Knocked Down Seven Times in First Round by Challenger, Throws Up the Sponge While Sitting in His Corner Between the Third and Fourth Periods

AT OPPONENT'S MERCY ALL WAY HE FAILED TO LAND TELLING BLOW

By Damon Runyon.

TOLEDO, July 4.—Squatted on the stool in his corner, a bleeding, trembling, helpless hulk, Jess Willard, the Kansas Giant, this afternoon relinquished his title of heavyweight champion of the world.

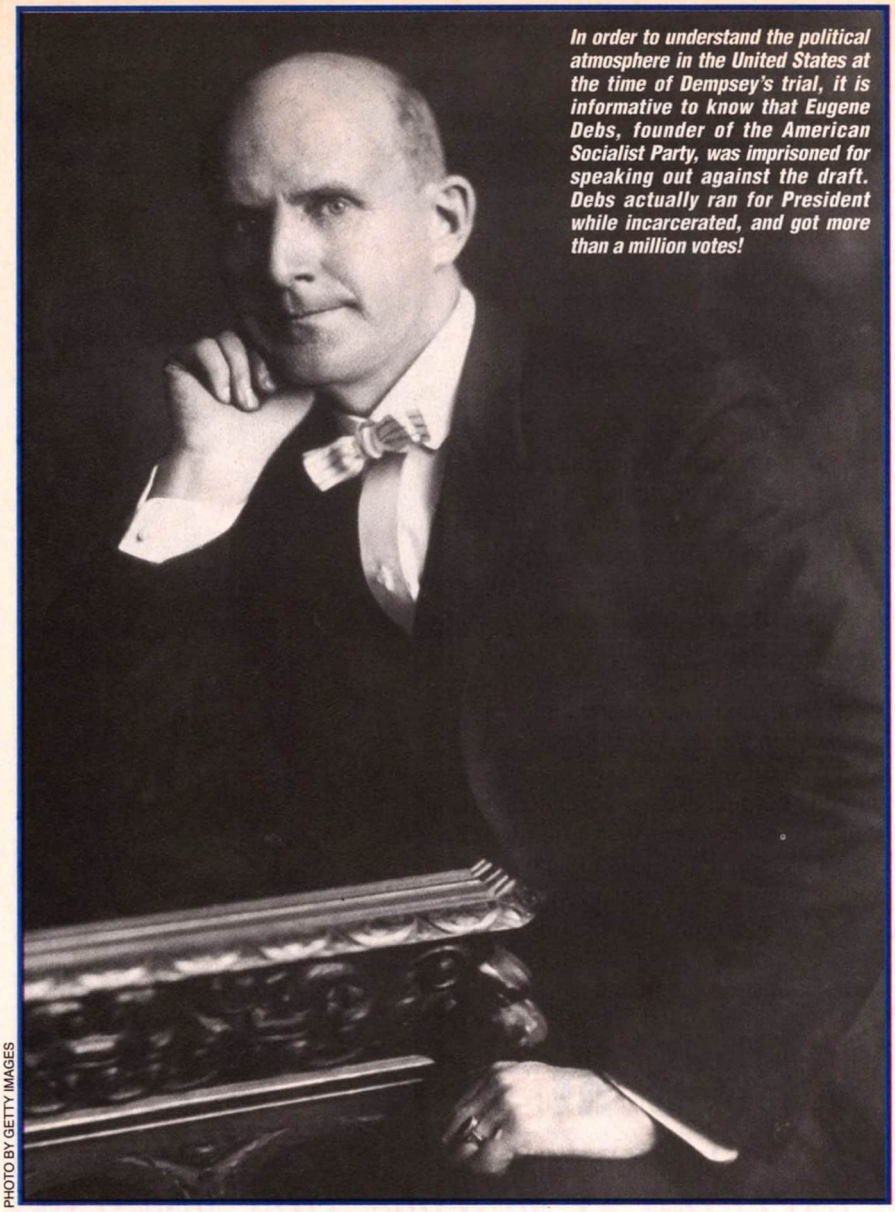
The end came just as the bell was about to toss him into the fourth round of a mangling at the paws of Jack Dempsey, the young mountain lion in human form, from the Sangre de Cristo Hills of Colorado.

He was a sad sight as he sat there, this ponderous fellow who four short years ago was acclaimed mightiest of men when he beat down old Jack Johnson.

The round-by-round, blow-by-blow story of the three rounds is the best way of telling of the fight itself. It follows:

ROUND ONE.

Willard landed the first blow, a light left to the head. The champion landed a right to the head. Dempsey hooked a left to Willard's stomach. Dempsey missed a left and right to the head. Willard snapped a left to the jaw.



In order to understand the political atmosphere in the United States at the time of Dempsey's trial, it is informative to know that Eugene Debs, founder of the American Socialist Party, was imprisoned for speaking out against the draft. Debs actually ran for President while incarcerated, and got more than a million votes!

PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

destroyed. "His eyes were dull," wrote John "Ring" Lardner. "He was cut above both eyes, and he was bleeding from inside his mouth. Six of his teeth had been knocked out. His jaw had been broken, along with three of his ribs. But most unsightly of all was the right side of the champion's face. Swollen, bloodstained, and cut, the right side of Willard's face looked like a peach that had repeatedly been dropped onto concrete." Sixty seconds later, when Dempsey answered the bell for round four he found that Willard was still sitting in his corner. The fight was over; Jack Dempsey was the new heavyweight champion.

Whatever euphoria the day before had buoyed within the Dempsey heart must have vanished the next morning with a stinging Grantland Rice editorial published in the *New York Tribune*:

"Dempsey is the champion boxer, but not the championship fighter. It would be an insult to every doughboy that took his heavy pack through the mule train trenches to go over the top to refer to Dempsey as a fighting man. He is a marvel in the ring, the greatest hitting machine even the old-timers have ever seen, but he isn't the world's greatest fighting man. Not by a margin of 50 million men who stood the test of cold steel and exploding shells for anything from six cents to a dollar a day."

If that wasn't enough, six months later Dempsey's former wife, Maxine Cates, resurfaced, now working in a San Francisco dance hall for a madam named "Tommy" Watson. Maxine had read about the champion's financial success and written a letter to the *San Francisco Chronicle* that leveled several nasty charges. The first was that Dempsey regularly beat her and once dislocated her jaw with a punch. The second was that, desperate for cash, he had taken a dive in an early loss to "Fireman" Jim Flynn who he subsequently knocked out in the first round. The third, and most amazing, was that the champion had never supported her or his family and his 4F deferment was contrived by Kearns to keep him out of the war.

Obligating Cates, the *Chronicle* published Maxine's letter uncensored on Friday, January 23, 1920, with the headline, "Dempsey Slacker, Says Wife, Claims to Have Proof, Dares Champion to Deny Charges." Ten days later, Charles W. Thomas, Assistant United States District Attorney for San Francisco, began moving toward a criminal indictment. Cates told reporters that she possessed a great sheaf of letters written by her former husband documenting how he and Kearns plotted to dodge the draft. Beyond that, Maxine said, the letters were full of dirty words, threats, and demands for sexual acts that were "violent and unclean."

Here surely was a wife sent straight from out of a screaming nightmare. Yet until the final days of his life, Dempsey defended her: "She was a good woman and I was deeply in love with her. She just turned out not to be strong enough to fight off all the pressure they put on her in the underworld." Here is a statement worth examining. Underworld, indeed!

Just a few months before the Willard fight, Dempsey had gone to San Francisco to visit Maxine, but wound up in a weeklong dalliance with her boss, Tommy Wilson, a move that drove Cates to incalculable rage. Then, several weeks later, con artist turned fight manager Kearns tried to quell Maxine's threatened blackmail attempt by taking her to bed and promising $40,000 postfight, which he, of course, never delivered.

PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

When Kearns needed $75,000 to hire a lawyer to defend Dempsey, he borrowed it from circus owner John Ringling, using Dempsey as collateral. That's theatrical producer Florenz Ziegfeld standing on the stairs next to Ringling.

Understanding all of this, Dempsey's retrospective comment about "pressure from the underworld" are of particular interest because it refers to the fact that once Maxine's charges became public and after she had publicly recanted in a second *Chronicle* story, the U.S. Department of Justice refused to accept her retraction and threatened to prosecute her. The basis of their prosecution was airtight, U.S. Attorney Thomas promised, owing to her career as a prostitute, involvement in bootlegging, and the fact that she had become a heroin addict. Terrified of going to jail for the rest of her life, she became the government's star witness in a trial that was only as strong as the evidence she now claimed never existed.

Certainly a factor in the implacable nature of the government's prosecution was the *Chronicle's* persistent headlines, but the main reason had to do with

Follow the money: Here's the reason it was so important for Kearns and promoter Tex Rickard to get Dempsey acquitted. A crowd of 80,183 paid to see the champion defend the title against French war hero Georges Carpentier, creating boxing's first million-dollar gate.

what Dempsey had described as the "underworld." Made up not of gangsters, like Capone, who had twice tried to fix fights for him and was twice turned down, this underworld was comprised of the super-patriot lobby of the time: veterans' groups, militant Christians, and right wing politicians who could not bear to see a moral reprobate like Dempsey earning $2,655,990 in purses the same year Babe Ruth earned $80,000 and the President of the United States half of that. Add to this the fact that this sullen "wife-beater" was part Jew and part Cherokee Indian, and it was easy to recognize what Dempsey had mislabeled as the "underworld." This wasn't the underworld he had seen rising like a seething dragon from beneath him, but the underbelly of America in the 1920s, a nation of fast money, fast women, and fast fame, where puritans held the power to write the laws and prosecute individuals as they saw fit.

Maxine Cates Dempsey may have been powerless to fight determined federal prosecutors, but not so for Team Dempsey, because what U.S. Attorney Thomas threatened was not Dempsey the man, but Dempsey, the enterprise. So, on this basis, Kearns and promoter Rickard took their case straight to Washington, D.C. Relying on Rickard's relationship with Broadway producer William Brandy, a meeting was arranged at the White House with Joe Tumulty, President Woodrow Wilson's Chief Security and Political Adviser.

Tumulty, a dapper, fast-talking Irish politician told them that he admired Dempsey, explaining that while he despised "the Reds," he also feared the new breed of super patriots that had been pushing the country toward war and social tyranny. As Dempsey was soon to fight French war hero Georges Carpentier, Kearns did not hesitate to offer Tumulty ringside seats, a gesture that helped gain him some sound advice: "Here is the address of the best-connected lawyer in Washington. His name is Gavin McNab. Get him to represent Mr. Dempsey and your troubles are over."

Acting on Tumulty's counsel, Kearns next paid a visit to McNab, a man who no doubt could have taught Dempsey's infamously tricky manager a thing or two about the art of the deal. After listening to the circumstances surrounding the indictments, McNab was concise in his assessment. "This isn't going to be easy," he told them, "but I accept the case. Win, lose, or draw, my fee is $75,000. I'll take it now."

Explaining that he was short on cash, Kearns watched McNab rise and start for the door until, at the last possible moment, he accepted the lawyer's terms. The money, he realized, could be raised from Rickard and longtime friend John Ringling of circus fame, based on selling shares in the only collateral he possessed, Jack Dempsey, a man who could even now be reinvented as a bona fide commercial property.

The $75,000 Kearns used to procure McNab had to have seemed well spent by the time the prosecution compiled its case and leaked it to the press. With Maxine's help, the government had rounded up four prostitutes who knew both Cates and Dempsey. Owners of the brothels Dempsey visited would testify that he kidnapped young women, dosed them with heroin, then paid tough brutes to beat and rape them into subservience. After the brothels owned them, the women were sold from house to house in what amounted to white slavery rings. According to prostitutes' testimony, taken under duress and with threats of their own prosecution, the women suggested

Dempsey with his second wife, actress Estelle Taylor (far left), pose with Rickard and his wife, Maxine. That's the Rickards' baby Jack is holding. Dempsey had just beaten ex-champ Jack Sharkey and was getting ready for his rematch with Gene Tunney, which was the final bout of his career.

the unthinkable: Jack Dempsey was one of these guns-for-hire.

Could any charge be tawdrier? Could any man appear more unsympathetic in a case backed by the inexhaustible resources of the Federal government? Moreover, the judge set to preside over the trial could not have seemed less hospitable, a woman named Annette Adams, who was a former Chief Federal Prosecutor, with a reputation for hating men. Perhaps it was good fortune or, more likely, McNab's White House connections, but it was not Adams seated on the bench when the trial began on June 8, 1920. Rather, it was Maurice J. Dooling, who had been McNab's first choice from the onset.

Several decades after his draft-dodging trial, Dempsey finally joined the armed forces during World War II. He's pictured being sworn into the U.S. Coast Guard by Captain G. U. Stewart in December 1942. By then, Dempsey's image had been sanitized and he was considered an American icon.

Basing its case on Maxine and her colleagues' testimony along with 35 "salacious" letters written by Dempsey to his ex-wife, the prosecution attempted to paint the fighter as a "sexual beast" and "coward." Haggard and nervous, Dempsey watched his sordid past unfold before his eyes and a courtroom crammed with spectators, many of whom wore American Legion buttons, anxious to listen, but equally keen on spreading the word that Dempsey was not Irish, as he pretended, but a Levantine Jew. "Notice the black hair, the swarthy complexion, and black Mediterranean eyebrows," the argument went. "Was it any surprise that he was a wife-beater, a professional rapist, and draft dodger?"

Cool and measured, McNab had not been recommended by Tumulty without good reason. Understanding that it was his mission to pull the emotion out of such charges and prejudices, he systematically presented his own set of witnesses including Dempsey's infirmed mother, Celia. Operating under the premise that a saint is generally preferable to a whore when it comes to witnesses, he gently questioned her about the factual basis of the government's case against her son. "Was Jack Dempsey your source of support?" he asked. "Did he send you the payments he claims? Can it be proved?" The answers to all of the questions were simple, clear, and ultimately credible.

"When Jack fought around here," Mrs. Dempsey testified, "he'd bring home his purse and give it to me. He'd say, 'Here, mother, do what you like with this, but be sure to buy some new clothes.' After he beat Bill Brennan in Milwaukee, he sent me $150 in bills wrapped in a newspaper story about how he knocked out Brennan in the sixth round. He always sent me money. I never had to ask—then, a while after he won the championship from Willard, Jack came out to Salt Lake City and bought us a beautiful $20,000 home so the whole family could live together again. Jack is a very good boy."

By trial's end, if there was a *coup de grace* administered to the government's case, it came in the form of testimony from their star witness, Maxine Cates Dempsey, but first the calculating McNab called boxing roustabout Tommy Fitzgerald to the stand. Kearns had sent him to Wells, Nevada, to pacify Maxine, Fitzgerald stated. When they met, he learned of a scheme that Maxine and Beulah Taylor, another prostitute, had concocted to shake down Dempsey. The letter to the *Chronicle* was the first phase, and then when Kearns reacted as they did by sending him, Maxine told him that she would return the letters for $40,000.

"When you informed Jack Dempsey of Maxine's statement," McNab asked, "how did he react?"

"The champion said that whatever the women had, they could give to the government or anybody else, and they could all go to hell."

"No $40,000 for blackmailers?"

"Objection!"

"Extortionists?"

"Objection!"

"No money for the women shaking him down?"

"Not a penny."

Once returned to the witness stand, Maxine could not remember anything about a demand for $40,000 except that Beulah Taylor "may have mentioned something like that."

"You swear you don't remember more than that?"

"I ain't swearing to nothing!"

"You are aware that Beulah Taylor has disappeared, that the government with its thousands of agents cannot find your confederate?"

Maxine shrugged, "People in my line of work can make themselves hard to find."

McNab then handed her an affidavit dated October 25, 1918, when Dempsey and Maxine, though separated, were still legally married. It was a waiver of all claims of dependency as a dependent, a form necessary for Dempsey's enlistment in the Navy.

"Look at this document, please. Is that your signature?"

"Yes."

"Why did you sign it?"

"If Dempsey wanted to fight for the country, he had a right to," she answered, and then began to weep.

Before the closing arguments were heard, Jack Dempsey, himself, would be called as a witness. Steady and sincere, he testified, and it was proven that not only had he contributed $330,000 to War Relief Funds through charity matches during 1917-1918, but he filled out papers to enlist in the Navy only to have them bounced back on November 11 of that same year when Josephus Daniels, Secretary of Navy, ordered no further enlistments accepted.

On Thursday, June 16, 1920, a jury of his peers acquitted Dempsey of all charges against him. Though the government's charges were blatantly political in nature and incontestably false, he wore the stigma of being a "coward," "wife-beater," and "draft dodger" like a hair shirt to his final days.

Interestingly, a July 2, 1921, article on the Carpentier-Dempsey fight written by reporter Irwin Cobb and published in *The New York Times* captures the essence of Dempsey, the Draft, and the American Dream. When Georges Carpentier, a French war hero, entered the ring in Jersey City, New Jersey, a brass band played the "Marsalle Aise" and 80,182 people, including Joe Tumulty, stood to greet him with a tremendous, heartfelt ovation. When Dempsey, the American champion, followed, a roar ensued, but it was not nearly as "sincere or spontaneous." Dempsey grinned, but it was a "scowling, forbidding grin." Partisans howled their approval, but the champion "refused to acknowledge these."

Finally, once the fight was over and Dempsey had annihilated the French war hero, these were the reporter's final impressions: "The first is that Carpentier never had a chance ... the second is that vision of him, doubled up on his side, like a frightened, hurt boy ... the third—and most outstanding—will be my recollection of that look on Dempsey's face when the realization came to him that a majority of the tremendous audience were partisans of the foreign-born opponent."

Dempsey would go on to be repackaged by Kearns, Rickard, and others into an all-American hero, voted by sportswriters the greatest athlete of the first half-century. That Madison Avenue image would last through the mid-1960s, when many recognized that he had neglected to fight the number-one contender during his heyday, Harry Wills, owing to political expedience and racial prejudice on the part of his manager, promoter, and society as a whole.

Nevertheless, Dempsey may well have been the greatest heavyweight of all-time who, when faced with two roads, chose the one that led away from who he really was, headed inexorably toward an American dream based on who people wanted him to be. In that sense, the flame of pure fire that burned so deeply within him shone a little dimmer. ■

Ron Felber is author of nine books and a lifelong fan of boxing.

PHOTO BY ALEX LIVESEY/GETTY IMAGES

After A Stay At The Roach Motel ...

AMIR KHAN IS READY TO RESUME HIS TITLE QUEST

By Brian Doogan

Far away from the MEN Arena in Manchester, England, and the old cotton mill town of Bolton in which he grew up, Amir Khan worked quietly and assiduously on his redemptive path. Above a launderette in the heart of Hollywood, California, alongside Hispanics, Filipinos, reformed hoodlums, singers, waitresses, aspiring actors, and the man recognized as the best pound-for-pound boxer in the world, the 22-year-old Olympic silver medalist from the Athens Games placed his trust and talent in knowing, caring hands.

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Roach is the mastermind behind both the Barrera match and Khan's rapidly expanded skill set. The trainer believes the 22-year-old Englishman is destined to be a world champion.

From the very first day that they worked together, Khan and Freddie Roach, the bespectacled proprietor of the Wild Card Boxing Gym, were the perfect fit. Khan needed to undergo a crash course in fundamentals, so Roach taught him the nuances of his art. The student learned quickly and when Frank Warren, Khan's promoter, phoned to discuss his next assignment, the teacher knew that the pupil would be ready.

"I like Marco Antonio Barrera, he's a great guy and he's been a great champion, but I took this fight because I think it's perfect timing for us," Roach explained to THE RING in the Wild Card less than three weeks before Khan's assured and dominant performance over the Mexican legend. "Barrera is an older man and he changed his style for a reason: He can't fight like he used to. This is the perfect opportunity and I think we have the perfect opponent for Amir at this time. He's ready for it."

Khan made what he calls "a young man's mistake" when he suffered his first defeat, a first-round kayo to Breidis Prescott last September.

"If you dissect what happened and watch the knockout in slow motion, you see the mistake he made," Roach said. "It wasn't so much that the other guy was a big puncher, it was more that Amir ran right into the shot, full force. When Amir throws a left hook to the body he has a tendency to reach for it, and when he reached for it he dropped his hands, sending out an invitation. He's not doing that anymore.

"Listen, when I told people that Manny Pacquiao would beat Oscar De La Hoya I said he would beat him with speed. Everyone thought I was talking about hand speed because I didn't define exactly what I said, but I was talking about his foot speed, and that's exactly what happened. Same thing in this fight. Barrera won't find Amir all night long. If he does, I'll be mad at [Khan]."

Ultimately, Roach would feel able to declare soon after Khan's victory by fifth-round technical decision over Barrera that "Amir will be my next world champion, for sure" and, certainly, many observers who have expressed concern about his flaws in the past can see marked improvement in his boxing.

Under the watchful eye of Roach and his new assistant, former world heavyweight champion Michael Moorer, Khan has become significantly more astute in the practicalities of his trade. Through the first 17 bouts of his career he was able to exploit the weaknesses of opponents with a helter-skelter attack, overwhelming them usually within a few rounds. But he had never properly studied the science of dissecting a particular challenge and formulating the right game plan. Nor did he understand the unique rhythms and narrative of a fight, as was abundantly clear when Prescott knocked him out in 54 seconds.

That version of Khan would have struggled even against a faded Barrera, for he would have been wide open to well-placed counters. He might not have known how to handle Barrera's cunning and the wealth of experience accumulated by the 35-year-old, a titleholder in three weight divisions, over 20 years and 73 fights.

That Barrera's best days are well behind him is inarguable, but it is worth remembering that just 15 months prior to their encounter at the MEN Arena being announced by Warren, Barrera had battled Pacquiao, the world's best boxer, bereft of the ferocity and potency of old perhaps, but he was able to go the 12-round distance comfortably. Worth bearing in mind, too, is that British bookmakers could not determine a favorite, with Khan and Barrera both offered at odds of 5-4 prior to the opening bell after late money came in for the Mexican.

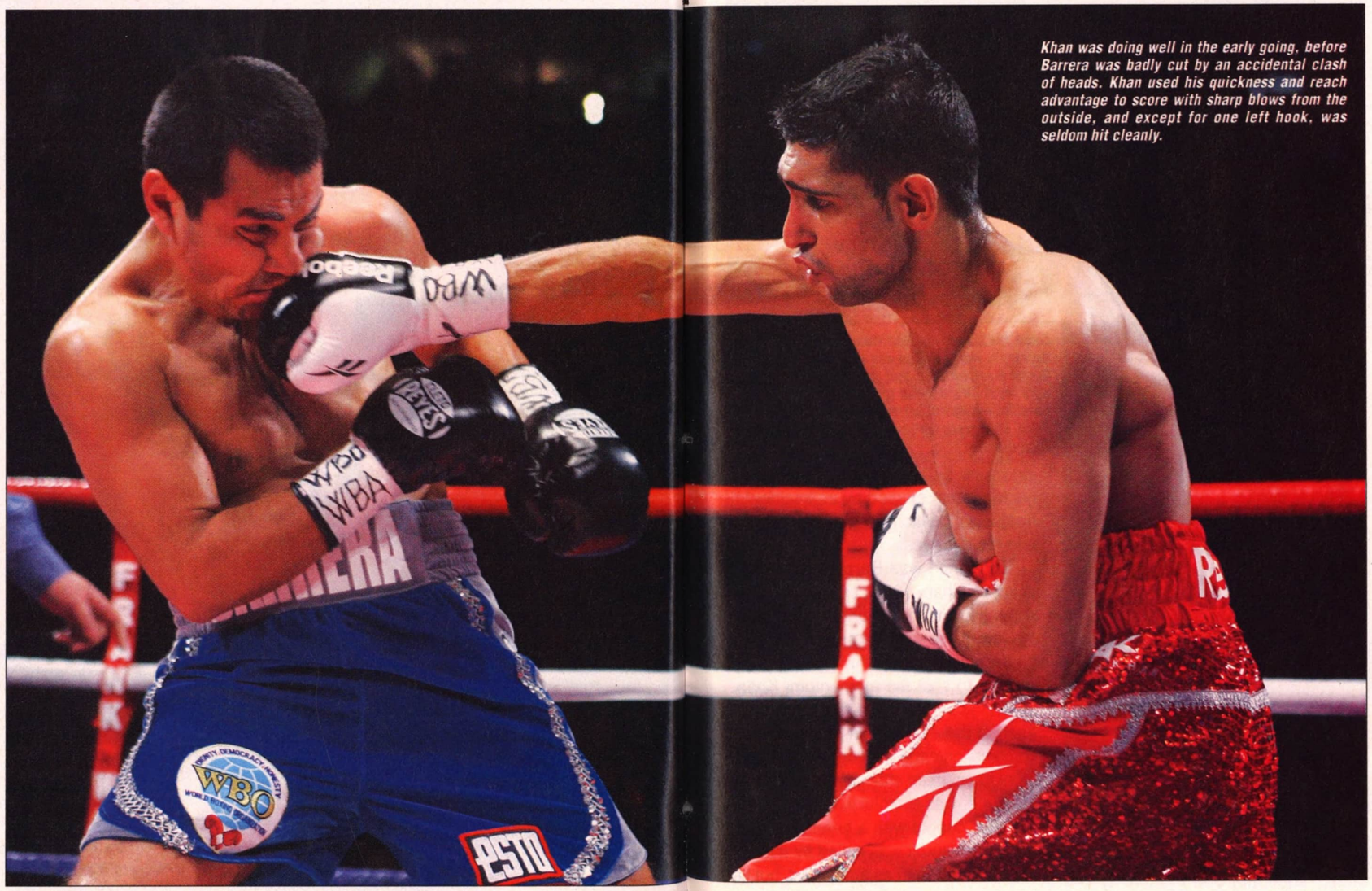
Clearly, not everybody shared Roach's convictions. Indeed the sporadic booing that greeted the announcement of Khan in the immediate moments after his knockout by Colombian puncher Prescott echoed in small pockets of the same venue as he walked to the ring to face Barrera.

"If I had lost this fight, you could forget about Amir Khan," the young contender acknowledged, though a crowd of approximately 20,000 at the MEN Arena emphasized his drawing power as well as potential to attract more fans for bigger fights down the road. "Some people saw the Prescott defeat and thought, *He's just a phony*. They thought that was the end of the road. I know I will have my critics, but I think I shut them up by beating Barrera. The criticism will ease off, I'm sure. People will forget about Prescott and realize that I'm a much better fighter and I won't make those mistakes again."

The mistakes had been manifold when Willie Limond, Michael Gomes, and Rachid Drilzane floored him. All of these spectacles were part of a pattern that was in evidence even when Khan was an amateur getting knocked down by Manchester's Craig Watson.

"I know that you can't teach a chin to take a punch better, but you can teach defense and you can teach fundamentals," Roach responded. "Amir is not 100 percent there yet, but he's close, and the thing is that the kid wants to learn. Michael and I have been working with him, talking to him, and he's very receptive. He goes home, watches the tapes of his workout and sparring and we tell him what to look for. The next day he comes back and he fixes that mistake because he saw it. If he can see the mistakes, he can fix them. If you don't know what you're doing wrong, what chance have you got? This was the problem, I believe.

"I realize that we have to protect his chin, but if anyone in the world gets hit right, they will go. I thought this was impossible when I was a fighter. I remember saying one time, 'Mike Tyson



Khan was doing well in the early going, before Barrera was badly cut by an accidental clash of heads. Khan used his quickness and reach advantage to score with sharp blows from the outside, and except for one left hook, was seldom hit cleanly.

couldn't knock me out. I've never been hurt in my life.' Then all of a sudden I found myself on the floor against Lenny Valdez and I thought, *How the hell did I get here?* That's all I remembered.

"You know, Manny got knocked out early in his career and look where he is now. I always say that there are fighters out there who work hard, but they're just not athletic enough, so they only go so far. Then you have guys who are great athletes, but they're lazy and they only go so far also. But guys like Pacquiao and Amir have both qualities and this is what has made one a world champion and the best pound-for-pound boxer in the world, and it can make Amir a world champion as well, for Amir is the same type of guy."

So how good is he, how good can he be, and where should he be placed among the world's best lightweights, and what did a one-sided beating of Barrera prove exactly? In isolation, his defeat of the aging warrior is inconclusive. Barrera never got into the fight and he was hampered from the opening round by a gaping wound high on his forehead, caused by an accidental head clash, which left blood streaming into his left eye.

PHOTO BY ALEX LIVESEY/GETTY IMAGES

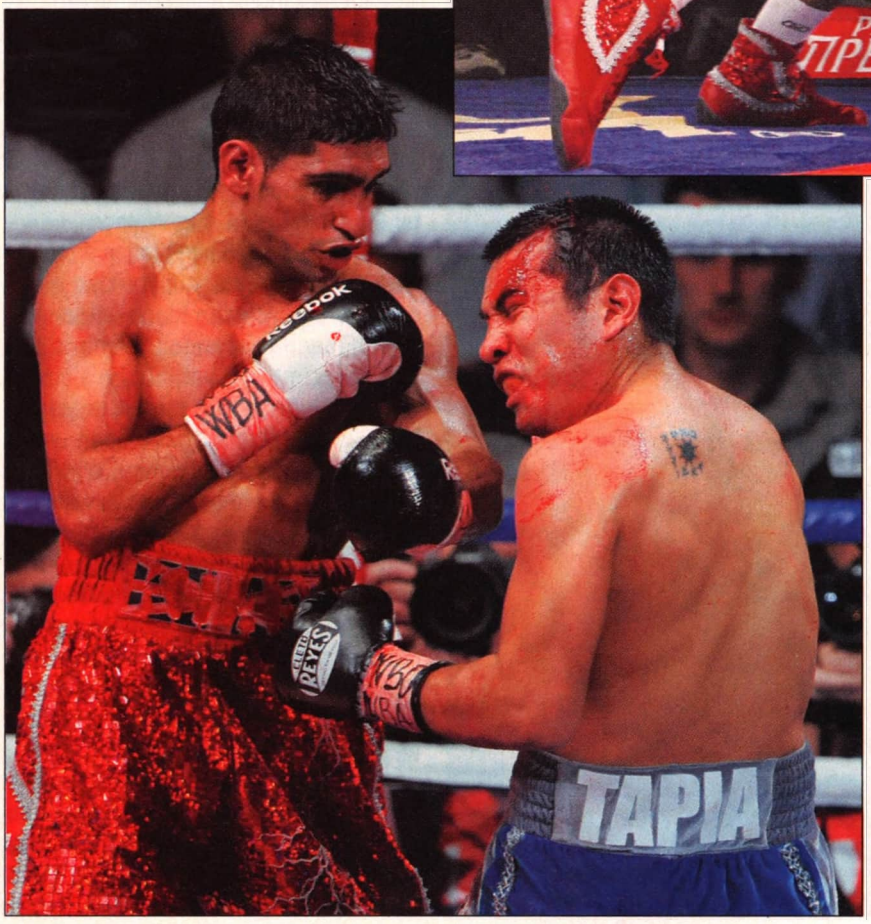


PHOTO BY ANDREW YATES/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Once the blood started flowing and obscuring Barrera's vision, Khan cut loose, punishing the faded Mexican icon and turning his face into a gory mask. It's difficult to know how things might have turned out if Barrera had not been cut, but most observers believe Khan would have won regardless.

Only once was Barrera, 135, able to knock Khan, 134½, out of his stride, when he landed a counter left hook to the jaw in the second round, but it was the briefest of breakthroughs and did nothing to shift the momentum. Khan, 20-1 (15), remained in control through each of the five rounds, landing quick combinations and utilizing lateral movement to optimum effect, though Barrera, 65-7 (43), was scornful in his appraisal.

"I got caught with a headbutt in the first round and it was called by the referee (Dave Parris) as a headbutt, but he

PHOTO BY ANDREW YATES/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Barrera's cut grew increasingly worse as the fight continued, finally forcing referee Dave Parris to stop the fight in the fifth round, which resulted in a technical decision victory for Khan. Barrera said the fight should have been stopped as soon as he was cut and ruled a no-contest.

did not stop the fight in the first round," Barrera said. "I don't know why because the cut was as big before as it is now. If I had both my eyes, the fight wouldn't have ended the way it did. I couldn't see the guy from the first round, the blood was in my eye and I just couldn't see with it. As far as his punching goes, I didn't even feel his punches. He's got fast hands, but his punches did nothing to me. I didn't feel them at all. I just went a little crazy because I wanted to try to fight before they stopped it. It was just because of the cut that I lost."

When referee Parris stopped the fight at 2:36 of round five because of Barrera's injury, handing the decision to the judges, Khan was way ahead on the scorecards. John Coyle (England) scored 50-44 and Jose Ignacio Martinez (Spain) and Terry O'Connor (England) both scored 50-45, all for Khan. THE RING also had it 50-45 for Khan.

"It seemed so easy," Khan said. "He will say he lost on cuts, but if he had stayed in there another two or three rounds, he would have got knocked out, I promise you."

In the overall context of Khan's career, even if the conclusion was unsatisfactory, this was his most significant win to date. His defense was mostly watertight, he followed the game plan devised by Roach perfectly, and he utilized his fluid movement and natural athleticism to a degree that rendered his smaller opponent almost impotent.

If the signs in the past pointed toward the bad accident that befell him last year, there were sufficient good signs against Barrera to suggest that a dramatic resurrection may be imminent. Khan has taken his lessons on board and he has learned, even if he remains a work in progress.

"The way I look at it, getting beat by Prescott was a blessing in disguise," Khan insisted. "If I had won that fight, I wouldn't be training in Hollywood with Freddie Roach and I would be making the same mistakes, inside the ring and outside. Boxing was always first, don't get me wrong, but I was being dragged here, there, and everywhere by people to open malls, visit boxing gyms, and attend dinners and functions. There was no off-switch; it was just intense the whole time. But out in California, I'm nobody, just another guy in the gym. I live in an apartment block above a Borders bookshop and I can walk the streets unnoticed. Honestly, the defeat by Prescott will be the making of me, I really believe this.

"Freddie is one of those coaches who likes things to be perfect. The work that we did on the pads every day was exactly how my fight against Marco Antonio Barrera would go, hitting and dipping under his punches, not waiting there to get hit back. Meanwhile, Michael Moorer was looking at my feet and lower body. If I was reaching over to throw the right hand or the jab, if I was going over my front foot, he would pull me up. With Manny Pacquiao in there to learn from as well, it's just like being at university."

The Wild Card University may soon have another graduate with first-class honors, but there are a few more lessons to be learned before he is ready to challenge a world champion such as Juan Manuel Marquez, the lightweight king.

"If this puts Amir in line for a world title shot, maybe we won't take it yet," Roach revealed. "I don't know if he's ready to be in that caliber yet and I want to make sure that when he is he's ready. If you hold the belt, then everyone in the world is after you, and if you're a true champion, you don't duck anybody. I want to make sure that he's ready for that position.

"But I'm really happy with the way he fought against Barrera. I was away from him for a week because I had to be with Pacquiao, and I told him that I wanted him to stay in training-camp mode. 'I don't want you to go home and find your friends and talk to them,' I told him. You can see them after the fight. If you win, they'll be there. If you lose, they won't.' That's life. Everyone loves a winner."

The winning smile on Khan's face as he walked away from the site of his greatest triumph—as well as his biggest fall—said it all. ■

Brian Doogan, THE RING's European correspondent, was ringside in Manchester for the Khan-Barrera fight.

"AAH-DA-MEK!"

POLISH POWER ROCKS THE CRUISERWEIGHT DIVISION

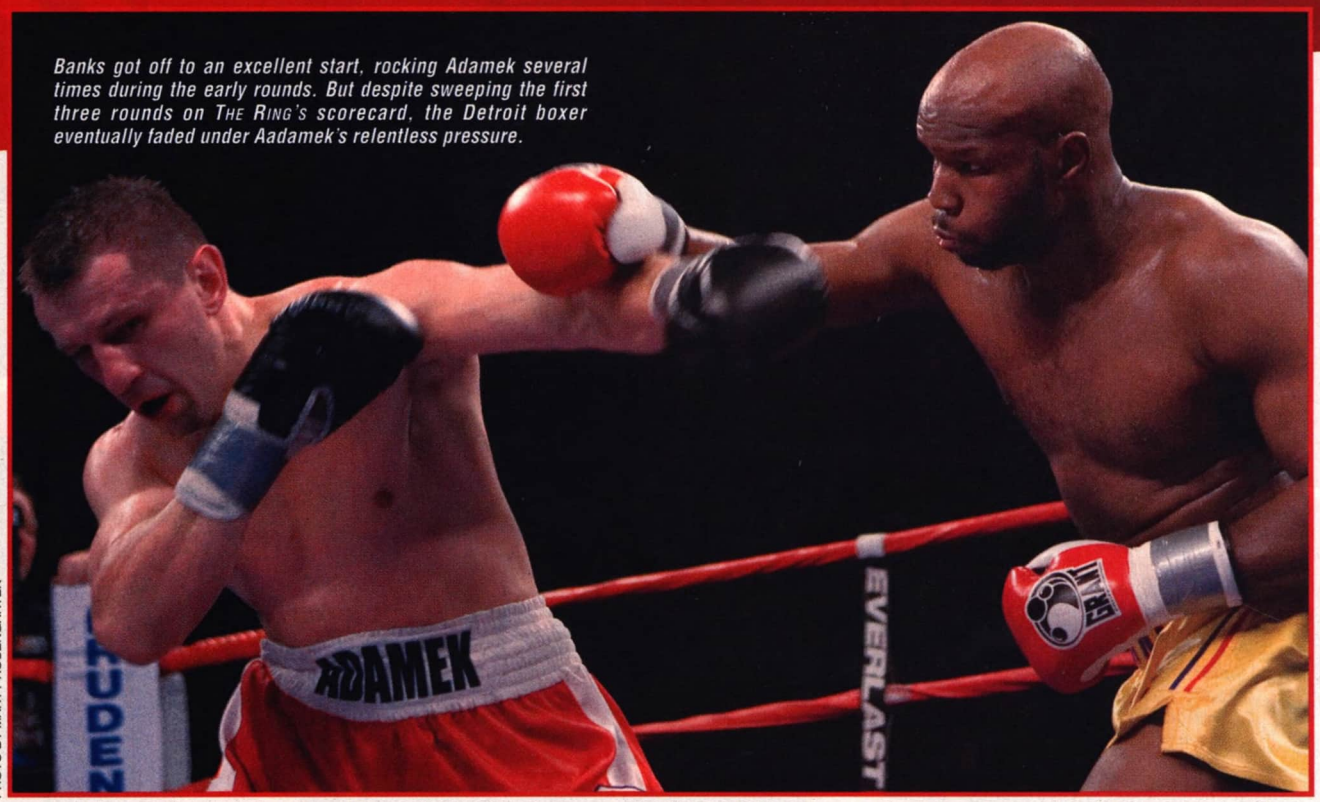
PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Adamek gave the passionate crowd of Polish-American fans (opposite page) plenty to cheer about with his eighth-round knockout of previously undefeated challenger Banks (shown). Adamek's rapidly growing fan base has turned Newark, New Jersey's Prudential Center into a hot boxing venue.

By Robert Cassidy

The buildup for a good fight is often like a slow dance. You arrive at the arena, settle into your seat, and keep one eye on the preliminaries while chatting about the main event. Even when a four-rounder or co-feature catches your attention, you never lose sight of the reason you are there. The anticipation builds and the intensity creeps up until the main event fighters finally step into the ring.



Banks got off to an excellent start, rocking Adamek several times during the early rounds. But despite sweeping the first three rounds on THE RING's scorecard, the Detroit boxer eventually faded under Aadamek's relentless pressure.

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

The waiting is over and drama unfolds.

This is not the case when Tomasz Adamek fights at the Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey. Slow dance? Forget it. This is like a slam dance.

The intensity and energy is palpable the minute one walks into the arena. The undercard is irrelevant. Adamek's Army—decked in the Polish colors of red-and-white—is a legion of flag-waving, face-painted crazies who want to see a good fight.

When Adamek defended THE RING cruiserweight world championship against Johnathon Banks on February 27, the chants for Adamek began 2½ hours before the main event and carried on for about 15 minutes after the fight ended. The prelims were reduced to a sideshow, a backdrop to history.

There was, however, one comical moment on the undercard when Newark resident Jerson Ravelo was fighting. A small section of Ravelo fans began chanting "JER-SON, JER-SON!" Suddenly, the Polish contingent joined in and the joint was rocking for Ravelo. But after approximately 30 seconds, Adamek's Army must have gotten bored with the local pug and resumed its chants of "AAH-DA-MEK, AAH-DA-MEK!" or "POLSKA, POLSKA!"

There is a large and loyal Polish-American population in Northern New Jersey and the metropolitan New York area. That has made the Prudential Center a perfect setting for Adamek's fights. It's easily accessible from the surrounding areas of Northern Jersey and a short train ride from New York City.

"The Rock," as it's called, has offered a formidable hometown advantage for the Polish-born champion. And after enduring the undercard, the wait was over. Or so it seemed.

The bell sounded for the very event for which they had arrived and Adamek was in action. Sort of. Adamek was poised for the attack, but initially didn't do much more than pose. It was Banks who controlled the early action. Banks jabbed comfortably and scored with several hard, overhand rights. Adamek pursued, but didn't punch often enough.

"I knew I had to be patient. It was a tactical plan to start slower because we had to watch for the right hand," said Adamek,37-1 (25). "As the fight went on, we knew he was going to tire."

The crowd didn't know it. The fans were anxious and loud and seemed to want to impose their lust for action on Adamek much the way he imposes his will on his opponents. They chanted and whistled and sang, giving the venue the feel of a European soccer match. But here, the only fighting was in the ring.

By the fourth round, it started to resemble a typical Adamek fight. Adamek's pressure, sometimes subtle but always constant, began to slow Banks, 20-1 (14). Adamek worked the body and always seemed to make Banks work. Whether he was forcing the Kronk fighter to punch back, move away, or even just think, it all began to wear on the challenger.

Banks' last big punch came in the eighth when a sharp right seemed to stun the champion. Moments later, the fight would end. Adamek steadied himself, came forward, and dropped Banks with a straight right hand. Banks managed to beat the count, but Adamek closed in, both fists pumping, and Banks was on the canvas again. Referee Eddie Cotton stopped the fight at the 1:30 mark.

It was over, but the cheering didn't stop. It somehow got louder.

"The crowd for Adamek-Banks was awesome," said Showtime analyst

Steve Farhood, who called the fight. "I find Polish fans to be among the most passionate in the world, and I use my experience at Andrew Golota fights as proof. It has to be the same fans rooting for Adamek, and in terms of excitement and consistency of effort, he gives them exactly what they want, something Golota hasn't always been able to do."

Indeed, Adamek is the warrior that evokes passion from his people. Rooting for Golota was often an exercise in frustration. There were low blows, lack of effort, and the sense that he could disappoint you at any second. At least with Adamek, you will have gotten your money's worth.

The fans know what they will get with Adamek, both in and out of the ring. Born in the countryside of Golwice, Poland, Adamek's father died when Tomasz was very young. He was raised by his mother and four sisters. He is soft-spoken and respectful, traits that remain from his humble roots. He

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Banks covers up as Adamek rumbles forward, throwing heavy punches. Although Ademek is a slow starter, once he gets going, the cruiserweight champion is almost impossible to discourage.

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Banks absorbs a left hook to the chin during Adamek's finishing barrage. Even in his lone professional loss, a decision defeat to Chad Dawson at lightweight in 2007, the heavy-handed Adamek had his opponent on the floor.

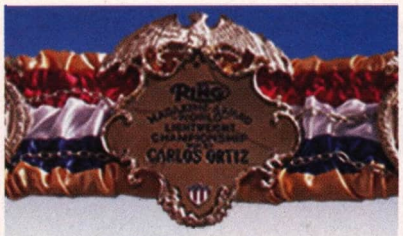


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PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Promoter's Dream: Unlike Andrew Golota, the last Polish fighter to attract a large fan base in the United States, Adamek is an emotionally stable individual and a clean fighter.

spoke with the help of a translator after the Banks fight. And while the champion is a man of few words, what wasn't lost in translation was his sincerity.

"I want to thank my fans very, very much," said Adamek. "I enjoy fighting for them. I prepare very, very hard for every fight. I come to bring my best and to fight hard. I am very pleased they enjoyed it."

"The atmosphere helps him a lot," said Wojciech Ziebowicz, a former professional soccer player from Poland who now writes for America's largest Polish-language newspaper *Nowy Dziennik*. "When your people are singing the national anthem while you're fighting, it can't do anything but help you."

According to Ziebowicz, an Adamek confidante, his fans admire the man as much as the fighter. Last summer, Adamek moved with his wife and two daughters to Secaucus, New Jersey.

"This is a good person, a good human being," said Ziebowicz. "He is the world champion, but he's always the same person. He doesn't change. He's a family man; he's very religious. Tomasz' idea of fighting is to treat your opponent the way you want to be treated. He really doesn't want to hurt his opponent. Yes, it's boxing, and people hit each other. He wants to win yes, but in a sporting way. He doesn't talk bad about his opponents."

This is the second time Adamek has fought at the Prudential Center (he beat Steve Cunningham there in December), and more than 11,000 customers paid their way in to the two fights.

"It really is a promoter's dream," said Kathy Duva, Adamek's promoter. "It's so much fun. I feel like I'm back in the early-1980s. We have the opportunity to build something from the ground up again. And it's thrilling to do that."

The executives who oversee the building—the ownership group for the NHL's New Jersey Devils—have signed Main Events to do six more fights through 2009. They believe boxing can be another franchise for them in addition to hockey.

And at the centerpiece of the boxing franchise is Adamek.

"It happened with Arturo Gatti and his crowd, Vinny Pazienza and his crowd up in Providence, and Pernell Whitaker with his crowd at the Scope in Norfolk," said Duva. "It doesn't happen too often. But there is a synergy that goes on between the fighter and his following, and Tomasz Adamek has that. It's exciting to watch."

It helps when your guy can fight. And Adamek can surely do that. He has made an easy transition from light heavyweight to cruiserweight, perhaps the most difficult 25 pounds in boxing to navigate. Duva likens the Polish champion to her former client, Evander Holyfield.

"Evander wasn't 6'6", 240 pounds," she said. "He was athletic. He was tough. Tomasz is athletic, he has power; he has fast hands. He's tough as nails and he's not going to stop."

The fact that he's not going to stop is what makes for good theater.

"I've had heads of major corporations come up to me after he fights and tell me, 'I've been to the Super Bowl, the Indy 500, the World Cup, and I've never been to anything as exciting as this,'" said Duva. "Both shows had a big-fight feel to them. That hair-standing-up-on-your-arms feel is what's happening when he fights there."

Duva said she has a June date open for Adamek, and since Bernard Hopkins has expressed an interest in fighting Adamek, the boxing rumor mill has been churning.

"I want the fight because I think I can beat him and I can be a world champion in three weight classes, which is something I know a lot of people haven't done before," Hopkins told THE RING while attending the Juan Manuel Marquez-Juan Diaz fight in Houston. "I don't know if Adamek has the speed to keep up with me; I think he has fast hands, but I know I won't be there when he tries to go after me; he doesn't have my footwork. He has some power. I saw that in his fight against Cunningham and it's something I have to watch out for. I do respect him, but I do think I can beat him too."

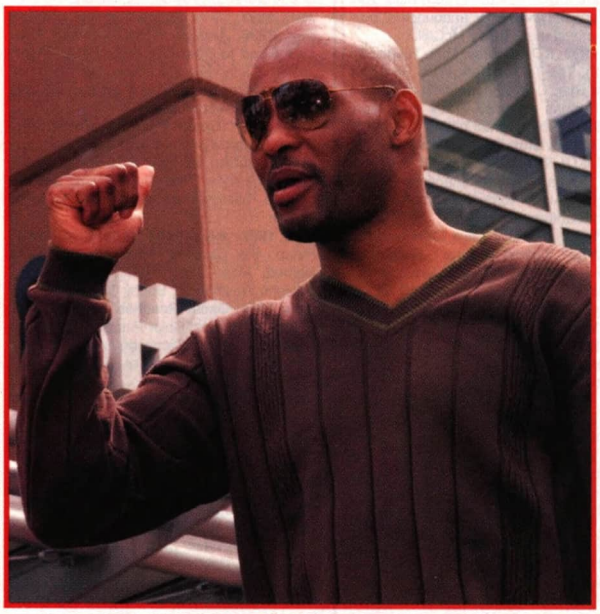
The fight is welcomed by Main Events, but as THE RING went to press, nothing had been solidified.

"I'm a little confused," said Duva, who was speaking from the site of the Joel Julio-James Kirkland fight. "Because I am at a fight where all the Golden Boy people are and nobody has said a word to me yet. If there's going to be a fight, don't you think you should talk to me?"

There is speculation that Golden Boy is still trying to lure Calzaghe out of retirement for a rematch with Hopkins. Nonetheless, B-Hop is already selling the Adamek fight.

"I'd be willing to fight Adamek in Newark, which seems like his home with all of his people there," said Hopkins. "I was willing to fight Calzaghe in Wales, I don't mind that. I think we can fill [the Prudential Center] up."

If that fight were made, Ziebowicz said that Polish fans would fly across an ocean to witness it. It's a fight everyone seems to want. Kathy Duva is just waiting for the phone call. ■



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Is "The Executioner" in Adamek's future? The former middleweight and light heavyweight champion has been campaigning for a shot at the cruiserweight title, especially now that it's looking like Joe Calzaghe will not come out of retirement for a rematch with B-Hop.

Robert Cassidy covers boxing for* Newsday *and is frequent contributor to* THE RING. *Managing Editor Joseph Santoliquito contributed to this story.

BACK ISSUES OF KO

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June 1983: WBA Jr. Middleweight Champion Davey Moore: Bracing For Duran's Last Stand. Color Pinup: Donald Curry. Interview: Pinklon Thomas. Also: Duran-Cuevas, Hagler-Sibson.

Aug. 1983: Michael Spinks: King Of The Light Heavyweights ... But The Glory Can't Erase The Sadness. Color Pinup: Johnny Bumphus. Interview: Jones & Rappaport. Also: Jones-McCrory, Pryor-Arguello II preview, world's best fighter poll, Jeff Chandler, Mark Breland, Leon Spinks.

Oct. 1983: Is Larry Holmes Finished? Color Pinup: Greg Page. Interview: Marvis Frazier. Also: Marvin Hagler, Bobby Chacon, Jack Dempsey.

July 1984: Donald Curry: "I'm Better Under Pressure." Color Pinup: Gerrie Coetzee. Interview: Curry. Also: Pipino Cuevas, John Mugabi, Bill Costello, M. Spinks-Davis.

Aug. 1984: WBC Heavyweight Champion Terrible Tim Witherspoon: A Superstar Of Tomorrow? Color Pinup: Rocky Lockridge. Interview: Sugar Ray Leonard. Also: Marvin Hagler, Gomez-LaPorte.

Oct. 1984: Golden Boy Mark Breland: Can He Be The Next Sugar Ray? Color Pinup: Jaime Garza. Interview: Aaron Pryor. Also: Bramble-Mancini, Sugar Ray Leonard.

Feb. 1985: Gerry Cooney: How Far Can He Go This Time? Color Pinup: Michael Spinks. Interview: Ray Mancini. Also: Dream fights, Hector Camacho.

May 1985: Thomas Hearns: *KO* Fighter Of The Year. Color Pinup: Gerry Cooney. Also: Camacho-Ramirez, Truth Williams, Year In Review.

July 1985: Aaron Pryor: Has Hawk Time Run Out? Color Pinup: Donald Curry. Interview: Greg Page. Also: Ray Mancini, James Shuler, Costello-Hatcher.

Aug. 1985: King Cobra: "Hagler-Hearns Is Done And I'm Better Than Both Of Them!" Color Pinup: John Mugabi. Interview: Bobby Czyz. Also: Larry Holmes, Roberto Duran, DeWitt-Lee.

Oct. 1985: Still Champ After All These Years: Larry Holmes—A Legend Continues To Grow. Interview: Mark Breland. Also: Michael Spinks, Milton McCrory, Wilfredo Gomez.

Nov. 1985: McGuigan! The Pluck Of The Irish. Also: Julio Cesar Chavez, Thomas-Weaver, Donald Curry, featherweights.

Dec. 1985: Pinklon Thomas: "Larry Holmes Betrayed Boxing." Color Pinup: Hagler-Mugabi. Also: Mike McCallum, Tyrell Biggs, Camacho-Ramirez.

Feb. 1986: King Michael: How Long Will He Rule The Heavyweights? Also: Barry McGuigan, Shawn O'Sullivan, Spinks-Holmes, *Rocky IV*, world's best fighter poll.

Oct. 1986: They're Back!!! The Cooney Circus Returns. Interview: Sugar Ray Leonard. Also: Jimmy Paul, Mike Tyson, Donald Curry.

Dec. 1986: Larry Holmes' Message To Mike Tyson: "Show Me You Can Kick My Butt!" Color pinup: Mark Breland. Interview: Holmes. Also: Witherspoon-Bruno, Evander Holyfield, Cruz-McGuigan, Danny Lopez.

Feb. 1987: Upset Of The Decade: Has Honeyghan Cut Short The Curry Era? Color Pinup: Marvin Johnson. Interview: Bobby Czyz. Also: Edwin Rosario, Hector Camacho.

June 1987: New WBA Welterweight Champion Mark Breland: He's Got A Lot To Smile About. Interview: Marvin Hagler. Color Pinup: Greg Haugen. Also: Michael Olajide, Carlos Monzon.

Nov. 1987: Michael Spinks: The War With Tyson Is Okay With Him. Color Pinup: Vinny Pazienza. Interview: Frankie Duarte. Also: Matthew Hilton, Hagler-Czyz.

Dec. 1987: Mike Tyson: Undisputed Heavyweight King—But Is He Losing His Loyal Subjects? Color Pinup: Matthew Hilton. Interview: Barry McGuigan. Also: Aaron Pryor, Mike McCallum.

Jan. 1988: The Collapse Of A Hero: Why Breland Never Hit The Mark Of Greatness. Color Pinup: Michael Spinks. Interview: Aaron Pryor. Also: Michael Nunn, Alexis Arguello, lightweights.

Feb. 1988: Pazienza & Haugen Go For Each Other's Throats. Color Pinup: Marlon Starling. Interview: Bob Arum. Also: Tate-Olajide, ESPN Boxing.

July 1988: Superfight History Dictates: Don't Expect The Expected From Tyson-Spinks. Color Pinup: Roger Mayweather. Interview: Dr. Ferdie Pacheco. Also: Roberto Duran, Azumah Nelson, Barkley-Olajide.

Aug. 1988: Tyson-Spinks: *KO's* Fearless Forecast Of Superfight '88. Color Pinup: Buddy McGirt. Interview: Matthew Hilton. Also: Lockridge-Knight, Evander Holyfield, Lloyd Honeyghan.

Sept. 1988: Tyson-Spinks, The Aftermath—What If Tyson Wins; What If Spinks Wins? Color Pinup: Frank Tate. Interview: Marlon Starling. Also: Barry McGuigan, Simon Brown, risk-taking.

Oct. 1988: Middleweight Terrorism: Iran Bombs The Hit Man. Color Pinup: Don Lalonde. Interview: Frank Bruno. Also: Roger Mayweather, Marvin Hagler.

Dec. 1988: Sugar Ray's Comeback: Why? Color Pinup: Simon Brown. Interview: Kevin Rooney. Also: Michael Nunn, best fighter poll, welterweight wars.

Jan. 1989: The Troubled Times Of Mike Tyson. Color Pinup: Lloyd Honeyghan. Interview: Gil Clancy. Also: Meldrick Taylor, Jeff Fenech, Boxing's Champs.

Sept. 1989: "I Beat Up Tyson Before, I'll Do It Again," by Carl Williams. Color Pinup: Michael Nunn. Also: Chavez-Mayweather, Brian Mitchell, Marv Albert.

Feb. 1990: George Foreman Risks A Multimillion-Dollar Shot At Tyson. Color Pinup: Brian Mitchell. Interview: Riddick Bowe. Also: Simon Brown, Molina-Lopez, East vs. West.

June 1990: A Sugar-Free Future? Thomas Hearns Is Looking Up. Color Pinup: Glenn McCrory. Interview: Michael Moorer. Also: Matthew Hilton, Molina-Suarez, Foreman-Cooney, Camacho-Paz.

July 1990: *KO* Interview—Sugar Ray Leonard. Color Pinup: Jorge Paez. Also: Michael Nunn, Buster Douglas, Jibaro Perez, the Olympians.

Aug. 1990: Meldrick Taylor: Brilliance In Defeat. Color Pinup: Buster Douglas. Interview: Teddy Atlas. Also: Buddy McGirt, Dokes-Ruddock, Simon Brown.

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Oct. 1990: Send In The Clown: Is Jorge Paez A Phenom Or A Fraud? Color Pinup: Paul Banke. Interview: Tony Lopez. Also: Chavez-Taylor II, Jesse Benavides.

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Jan. 1991: Macho Ado About Nothing? Why Hector Camacho Wants To Be Believed. Color Pinup: Meldrick Taylor. Interview: Irving Rudd. Also: Sugar Ray Leonard, Orlando Canizales, Vinny Pazienza.

Feb. 1991: 10 Fighters To Fear: Boxing's Most Destructive Hitters. Color Pinup: Razor Ruddock. Interview: Ray Mercer. Also: Roberto Duran, Saoul Mamby, Mills Lane, Sugar Ray Robinson.

May 1991: Ruddock Eyes The Big Upset Of Tyson. Color Pinup: Luisito Espinosa. Interview: Jeff Fenech. Also: Virgil Hill, Pernell Whitaker, Alex Ramos, Simon Brown, Buddy McGirt.

June 1991: Exclusive *KO* Interview: Evander Holyfield. Color Pinup: Raul Perez. Also: Norris-Leonard, Charles Williams, champs of 1971 vs. 1991, J.C. Chavez.

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Aug. 1991: Desert Storm II: Will The Tyson-Ruddock Rematch Be Different? Color Pinup: Loreto Garza. Interview: Michael Carbajal. Also: Brown-Blocker, Fenech-Nelson preview, Harold Brazier, Yuh-Carbajal.

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Jan. 1992: The Tyson-Holyfield Showdown: An Exclusive Forecast By George Foreman. Color Pinup: Myung Woo Yuh. Also: Fenech-Nelson, TV announcers, boxing's toughest men, Toney-McCallum.

March 1992: *KO* Interview Mike Tyson: An In-Depth, Toe-To-Toe Talk With Boxing's Biggest Star. Color Pinup: Michael Moorer. Also: Thomas Hearns, Tracy Patterson, Larry Holmes, best fighter poll.

May 1992: Division-By-Division Faceoffs: The Best Of '92 vs. The Best Of '67. Color Pinup: James Warring. Interview: Hector Camacho. Also: Tommy Morrison, Bert Cooper, Gianfranco Rosi.

June 1992: If Not Tyson Or Holyfield, Then Who? Bowe? Moorer? Ruddock? Lewis? Mercer? Color Pinup: James Toney. Interview: Shelly Finkel. Also: Scotty Olson, overrated and underrated fighters, Orlin Norris, Whitaker-Pineda.

July 1992: The Title Reign of Evander Holyfield: A Reason To Hide ... Or A Reason For Pride? Color Pinup: Buddy McGirt. Interview: Julian Jackson. Also: Kelley-Dorsey, Nelson-Fenech, Kennedy McKinney.

Aug. 1992: Bowe Knows The Big Fight: The Top Contender Analyzes Holmes-Holyfield. Color Pinup: Julian Jackson. Interview: Michael Spinks. Also: Thomas Hearns, Blue Horizon, fighting fear, Toney-Barkley, Greg Haugen.

Sept. 1992: Can Tommy Morrison Punch Out The Theory ... White Men Can't Fight. Color Pinup: Welcome Ncita. Interview: Ken Norton. Also: Reggie Johnson, Jimmy Paul, McGirt-Blocker, Ali-Shavers.

Oct. 1992: The Olympics: Golden Memories ... And Golden Futures? Color Pinup: Reggie Johnson. Interview: Bobby Czyz. Also: Genaro Hernandez, Terry Norris.

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Dec. 1992: The Final Four: Ruddock vs. Lewis, Holyfield vs. Bowe. Color Pinup: Genaro Hernandez. Interview: Lennox Lewis. Also: Whitaker-Pineda, Bowe-Coetzer, Alex Stewart, Gamache-Lopez.

Jan. 1993: Holyfield vs. Bowe: Who Will Win And Why. Color Pinup: Al Cole. Interview: Vinny Pazienza. Also: James Toney, Terrence Alli, Maurice Blocker.

Feb. 1993: Strictly Business: George Foreman Fights For The Love Of It—The Money! Color Pinup: Vinny Pazienza. Interview: George Benton. Also: Tracy Spann, Oba Carr, greatest eras.

March 1993: Not Just Another English Muffin: Lennox Lewis Powers His Way Toward The Title. Color Pinup: Leeonzer Barber. Interview: Emanuel Steward. Also: Reggie Johnson, Lopez-Gamache, USA Network.

May 1993: Recapping The Future: Julio Cesar Chavez' Road To 100-0. Color Pinup: Terry Norris. Interview: Junior Jones. Also: Buddy McGirt, Riddick Bowe, Raul Marquez.

Dec. 1993: The *KO* Feud Rages On: "I Will Torture You!" Says Riddick Bowe To Lennox Lewis. Color Pinup: Kennedy McKinney. Also: Mississippi boxing, George Foreman, Yori Boy Campas , Carbajal-Kim, Morrison-Moorer.

June 1995: The Tug-Of-War Over Mike Tyson. Color Pinup: Wilfredo Vasquez. Interview: Oliver McCall. Also: Alejandro Gonzalez, Alexis Arguello, Kostya Tszyu.

Sept. 1996: Tyson vs. Seldon. Don't Bet On This Fight Until You've Read This Story! Color Pinup: Arturo Gatti. Interview: Butterbean. Also: Dana Rosenblatt, '92 Olympians, McGuigan-Pedroza.

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Jan. 1997 (Special 88-Page Edition): Bowe-Golota II: Hatred And Vengeance ... It's A Beautiful Thing! Color Pinup: Johnny Tapia. Interview: Lou Duva. Also: Mouse Strauss, heavyweight rematches, Azumah Nelson.

Feb. 1997: *KO's* 1997 Wish List. Color Pinup: Ike Quartey. Interview: Naseem Hamed. Also: David Tua, Felix Trinidad, Adolpho Washington, Bobby Czyz.

Aug. 1997: Oscar Reaches ... But Can't Grasp The Stars. Color Pinup: Nate Miller. Interview: Hector Camacho. Also: Norris-Trinidad preview, Hall of Fame, Angel Manfredy.

Nov. 1997: Filling In The Missing Pieces: What "The Bite" Means To Boxing. Color Pinup: Christy Martin. Interview: Jim Lampley. Also: Vince Phillips, British prospects, Iran Barkley.

Holiday 1997 (Special 88-Page Edition): Holyfield-Moorer II: Can Evander Avenge His Ugliest Defeat? Color Pinup: Vince Phillips. Interview: Mills Lane. Also: Roy Jones, Baby Jake Matlala, Boxing 2000.

Jan. 1998: De La Hoya Humbles The Macho Man: "Oscar's The Best I've Ever Fought." Color Pinup: William Guthrie. Interview: Mark Johnson. Also: Johnny Tapia, Pinklon Thomas, defense.

March 1998: Evander Holyfield: For The Real Deal, Lewis Is No Big Deal. Color Pinup: Lou Del Valle. Interview: Lennox Lewis. Also: David Izon, Meldrick Taylor, rapid weight loss.

May 1998: Living Up To The Hype: Sometimes They Do ... Sometimes They Don't. Color Pinup: David Reid. Interview: Best Of ... (Part III). Also: Naseem Hamed, Marty Denkin, women's boxing.

June 1998: Lewis vs. Holyfield: Why The Fight Of The Year Isn't Going To Happen. Color Pinup: Evander Holyfield. Interview: Eddie Futch. Also: Hector Lizarraga, pain, Head-To-Head review.

Aug. 1998: Lewis Bombs Out Briggs: Would The WBC Champ Do This To Holyfield? Color Pinup: Keith Mullings. Interview: Shane Mosley. Also: Pernell Whitaker, Marco Antonio Barrera, Roberto Garcia.

Sept. 1998: Can Mike Tyson Make A Successful Comeback? Sugar Ray Leonard Has The Answer. Color Pinup: Michael Grant. Interview: Brad Jacobs. Also: Naseem Hamed, Wayne McCullough, Kirk Johnson.

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July 2000: Today's Fighters, Tomorrow's Hall Of Famers. Color Pinup: Keith Holmes. Interview: Shane Mosley. Also: Zab Judah, Morales-Barrera, Wayne Braithwaite.

Aug. 2000: Mosley Prepares For Oscar: "It Will Be Like The First Round Of Hagler-Hearns." Color Pinup: Steve Johnston. Interview: Chris Byrd. Also: Vargas-Quartey, Thomas Hearns, Felix Trinidad, common sense vs. cowardice.

Sept. 2000: Now Vargas Is Ready For Trinidad & De La Hoya. Color Pinup: Erik Morales. Interview: Chris Byrd. Also: Trinidad vs. all-time greats, Thomas Hearns, common sense vs. cowardice.

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Dec. 2000: Mike Tyson vs. Lennox Lewis: 15 Insiders Pick The Winner. Color Pinup: Shane Mosley. Interview: Frank Maloney. Also: Oscar De La Hoya, Bronco McKart, our heroes' heroes.

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Feb. 2001: Fernando Vargas' Internal Battle: If He Can't Win It, He Can't Beat Trinidad. Interview: Evander Holyfield. Also: Derrick Gainer, Roy Jones, Naseem Hamed.

April 2001: Lewis Is Too Much For Tua ... But Could Tyson Do Any Better? Interview: Max Kellerman. Also: Floyd Mayweather, Wladimir Klitschko.

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Aug. 2001: Sugar Shane Mosley: Too Sweet For The Bad Boy Era? Interview: Richard Steele. Also: Evander Holyfield, Roy Jones, Jesus Chavez.

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Feb. 2002: Bernard Hopkins: "I Am The American Dream. I Am The American Story." Interview: Wladimir Klitschko. Also: Omar Sheika, Vernon Forrest, Juan Lazcano.

April 2002: After Hitting Rock Bottom ... Lennox Is Back On The Path To Greatness. Interview: Duva Boxing. Also: Zab Judah, Mike Tyson, Thomas Tate.

June 2002: Tyson vs. Lewis: 10-Page Preview & Analysis. Interview: Jameel McCline. Also: *Ali* movie, Dorin vs. Balbi & Ward vs. Leija.

Aug. 2002: Still Crazy After All These Years: Should Mike Tyson Be Allowed To Fight? Interview: Kostya Tszyu. Also: Barrera-Morales II preview, Ayala-Adams, Ricky Hatton.

Dec. 2002: Wladimir Klitschko: Would He Be Too Much For Lennox? Interview: Joe Calzaghe. Also: Barrera-Morales II, Evander Holyfield, Freddie Roach.

Winter 2002: A Realistic Look At Tyson's Comeback: He Can't Make History, But He Can Make Millions. Interview: Micky Ward. Also: Antonio Tarver, Antwun Echols, Acelino Freitas.

March 2003: Oscar De La Hoya—The War That Rages Within. Interview: Klitschko brothers. Also: Kassim Ouma, Eric Morel, holiday gifts.

May 2003: Danger Zone! Will Roy Jones Be Doomed By His Heavyweight Ego? Interview: Buddy McGirt. Also: Gatti-Ward II, Floyd Mayweather, Erik Morales.

July 2003: Boxing's Biggest X-Factor: Can Hopkins Recover From His Self-Inflicted Wounds? Interview: Shane Mosley. Also: Kostya Tszyu, DaVarryl Williamson, 10 best defensive fighters.

Sept. 2003: Sugar Roy? How Jones Rates With The All-Time Greats. Interview: Chris Byrd. Also: Corrie Sanders, Jean-Marc Mormeck, Kermit Cintron.

Nov. 2003: De La Hoya-Mosley II: Will Three Years And Seven Pounds Make A Difference? Interview: James Toney. Also: Michael Watson, Erik Morales, Jones-Holyfield head-to-head.

Winter 2003: *KO* Interview Arturo Gatti: "Kostya Tszyu Needs Me More Than I Need Him." Also: Mayorga-Forrest II, Zab Judah, Corrales-Casamayor preview, Joe Calzaghe.

Feb. 2004: Shane Mosley: A Second Chance At Superstardom. Interview: Bernard Hopkins. Also: Laila Ali, Scott LeDoux, retirement.

April 2004: Human After All: Tarver Makes Jones Turn To Tyson. Interview: Emanuel Steward. Also: Sharmba Mitchell, Toney-McCline preview, trash-talking.

June 2004: What Could Tyson Do To Jones? Interview: Antonio Tarver. Also: Bernard Hopkins, Spinks-Mayorga.

Oct. 2004: Dr. Klitschko: The Perfect Band-Aid For The Heavyweight Division. Interview: Diego Corrales. Also: Monte Barrett, Cory Spinks, Vinny Paz & Sven Ottke.

Feb. 2005: Exclusive KO Interview—Manny Pacquiao. Also: Kostya Tszyu, Manning Galloway, quitting, perfect heavyweight.

Oct. 2005: El Feroz With A Twist: Retooled Vargas Gets Defensive. Interview: Zab Judah. Also: Marco Antonio Barrera, Jean-Marc Mormeck, Julio Cesar Chavez Jr., *KO* at 25.

Feb. 2006: Can Hip Hop Revitalize Boxing? Interview: Erik Morales. Also: Zab Judah, Ricardo Mayorga, Arturo Gatti, Luis Collazo, Roman Karmazin.

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Trading Boxing Gloves For Golf Gloves

CALZAGHE QUIETLY SETTLES INTO RETIREMENT

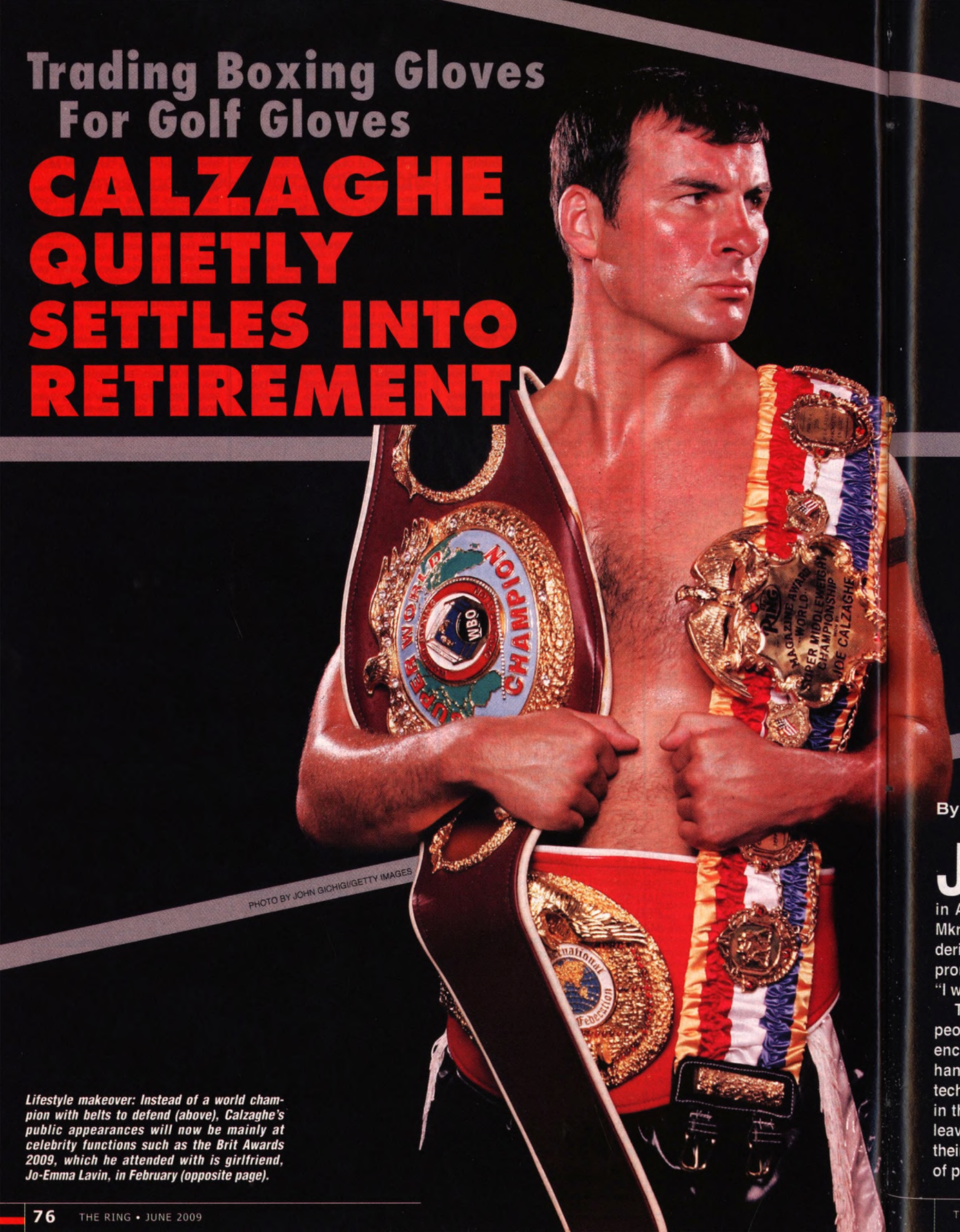


PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/GETTY IMAGES

Lifestyle makeover: Instead of a world champion with belts to defend (above), Calzaghe's public appearances will now be mainly at celebrity functions such as the Brit Awards 2009, which he attended with is girlfriend, Jo-Emma Lavin, in February (opposite page).

PHOTO BY JON FURNISS/GETTY IMAGES

By Brian Doogan

Joe Calzaghe's career might have ended without any genuine feeling of triumph, largely disregarded by mainstream sports fans in Britain and even by boxing fans in America. Names of opponents such as Kabary Salem and Mger Mkrtchian did not exactly trip off the tongue, but they provided ammunition to deride his accumulation of defenses of his WBO super middleweight title. "I couldn't pronounce their names, let alone [did I] know who they were," Calzaghe reflected recently. "I was struggling to fill the Cardiff Ice Rink."

That he was better than this is an easy conclusion to draw now, but a sense that too few people shared this view through much of his career ate away at him until his watershed encounter against Jeff Lacy in March 2006. Arguably, Calzaghe possessed the quickest hands and most prodigious work rate of any contemporary world champion, and his technique, nerve, and reliably resilient chin were underpinned by an iron will, forged deep in the Welsh valleys. His retirement after 46 fights and 46 wins over more than 15 years leaves him in a select band of boxers who remained unbeaten throughout the course of their careers. But in an effort to find perspective, The Ring has asked and answered a series of pertinent questions about one of British sports' most accomplished practitioners:

Is Calzaghe's retirement for real?

At noon on the day after his victory on points against Roy Jones at Madison Square Garden in New York, Calzaghe met with British reporters in a cafeteria at the hotel in which he was staying, the AKA Central Park. The postfight party, which had begun in a bar not far from the Garden before continuing in his suite with family and close friends, was still in full swing when he sat down alongside his father and trainer, Enzo, and fielded questions. Calzaghe had downed an impressive amount of lager, but he was still clear-headed.

"I think I'll walk away easily enough from boxing," he said. "Is the temptation always there to carry on? Not really. It is not a case of fighting until I can't fight anymore. I have always said I want to stay ahead of the game. There is a good chance I will call it a day."

His mind had been made up for some time, but he did not want to be rushed into a public announcement. He enjoyed Christmas with his family, toured Britain on the after-dinner circuit, received his CBE (Commander of the British Empire) award from the Queen at Buckingham Palace, and returned to the gym in Cwmbran, South Wales, to stay in shape because he knew that he would no longer have the preparation for a fight to keep his weight down.

All the while speculation mounted that he would be seduced by the possibility of a swansong fight at Cardiff's Millennium Stadium against Bernard Hopkins, from whom he won the world light heavyweight title, or Chad Dawson, the exciting WBC light heavyweight titleholder, but, in private, Calzaghe never wavered. He allowed some time to pass so that he could get used to the reality of retirement, playing golf again for the first time in almost a decade, having previously given up the game because it caused inflammation in his elbow, which reduced his effectiveness in the ring.

"I took my time because I just wanted to let the reality of retirement sink in," he told THE RING. "When you do something all your life and you love it, you can't make a decision overnight to walk away. For 18 months I was looking for the right moment, and this is it. I've achieved everything I wanted to achieve—there's nothing more."

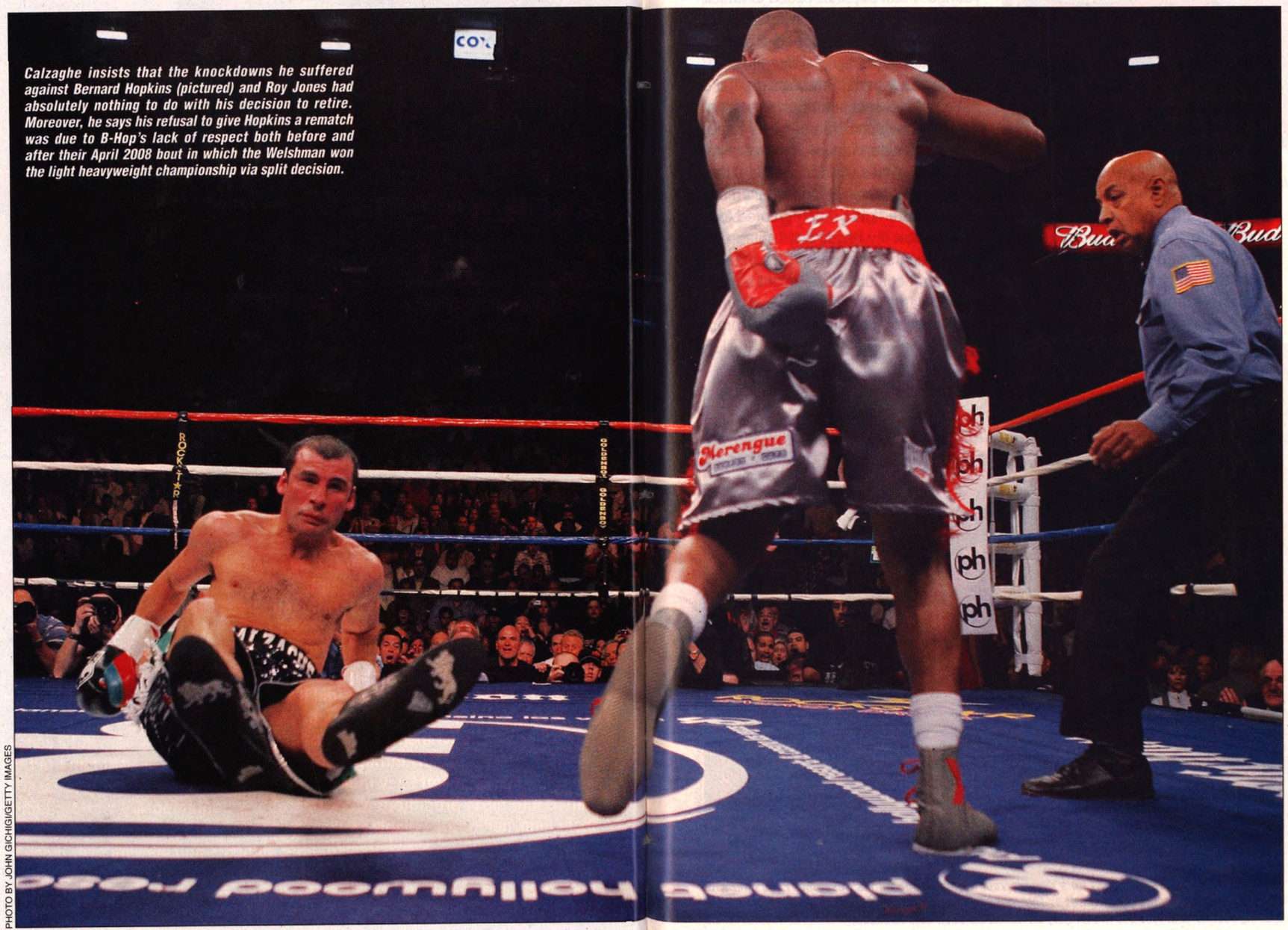
Unlike so many champions in the past, this retirement is for real.

Why did he not box a rematch with Bernard Hopkins or face Chad Dawson or Carl Froch?

Hopkins' overtures were always going to be futile because of the gracelessness he showed before and after his defeat by Calzaghe in April 2008. When he declared that he "would never lose to a white boy" during a faceoff with Calzaghe on the day before the Floyd Mayweather-Ricky Hatton encounter inside the media room of the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, he was strongly criticized in the mainstream media. Significantly, Hopkins refrained from repeating the remark on the American leg of a prefight publicity tour having tried to justify himself to reporters in London. His failure to give Calzaghe his props at the postfight press conference further diminished him in Calzaghe's mind, suggesting that he could "stick a rematch up his ass" when the calls came.

"He's an idiot, a complete ass and I don't want to give him a rematch," Calzaghe made plain on the day after his domination of Jones. "It wouldn't be a good fight because the way he fought against me in Las Vegas was cowardly. He held on all night and feigned being hit by low blows. He tried to steal the fight. The guy's a racist and he was never going to give me any credit. He got his ass kicked by a white boy and he's got to accept that. Screw Hopkins."

Calzaghe has more time for Dawson—"a solid fighter who can take over the light heavyweight division one day maybe, but he just doesn't represent a challenge for me now"—and even less time for Froch, the WBC super middleweight titleholder. "He's been around for two minutes and his name has no value in America. Why would I want to fight Froch?" Calzaghe asserted. "Besides, the issue was never, 'Who am I going to fight next?' The issue was simply, 'Do I want to fight?' The most likely opponent would have been Hopkins. I didn't box my best that night in Vegas, but I still won the fight in his country and I would have gained nothing by beating him again."



Calzaghe insists that the knockdowns he suffered against Bernard Hopkins (pictured) and Roy Jones had absolutely nothing to do with his decision to retire. Moreover, he says his refusal to give Hopkins a rematch was due to B-Hop's lack of respect both before and after their April 2008 bout in which the Welshman won the light heavyweight championship via split decision.

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/GETTY IMAGES

Did getting knocked down by Hopkins and Jones in his last two fights influence his decision to retire?

In a word: no. Hopkins floored Calzaghe with a straight right hand through his southpaw guard less than midway through the first round. Calzaghe looked hurt, though he climbed to his feet quickly and Hopkins did not pull the trigger again until late in the round. The knockdown was symptomatic of a lull in concentration and even a lack of respect for Hopkins on Calzaghe's part than it was a sign of ebbing powers. Hopkins did not come close to replicating his feat.

"My powers of recovery have always been excellent, and on both of these occasions I got straight back up and fought back, just as I did when I got caught by Byron Mitchell and Kabaray Salem in my only other career knockdowns," Calzaghe reflected. "To me, it was just a sign that I was becoming careless and, in the case of the Hopkins fight, I hadn't prepared properly because I never respected the guy.

"I was shaken more by Jones even though he caught me with the inside of his right forearm. But the knockdowns weren't a factor in my decision to retire. If you're looking for a factor, look no further than my son, Connor, who couldn't watch the Jones fight. He just sat in the dressing room crying his eyes out, and that was very affecting. I didn't want to put him through that again. Really, it was my kids, Joe and Connor, and my mum, who wanted me to retire for years, who had more of an influence than anybody or anything else."

What does his retirement mean for British boxing?

Increasingly marginalized by the all-consuming Premier League and Champions League (the soccer equivalent of the NFL in America), boxing in Britain has lost a popular paragon of towering achievement. Through his accomplishments in

PHOTO BY DENISE TRUSCELLO/WIREIMAGES

Singer Tom Jones, actress Catherine Zeta-Jones, and Calzaghe display the flag of their homeland after the Hopkins fight. Calzaghe's retirement has left a significant void in the British boxing scene.

the ring and quiet dignity, which has characterized his life outside the ring, Calzaghe has set a formidable standard for other fighters to follow. His departure also leaves a huge gap in the boxing calendar, for only the big fights attract substantial mainstream media coverage. Ricky Hatton's bout with Manny Pacquiao on May 2 in Las Vegas will receive the full treatment, obviously, but who are the stars besides world junior welterweight champion Hatton, whose career is also nearing its end?

James DeGale, the 2008 Olympic Games gold medalist from Harlesden, north London, and fellow Olympians Frankie Gavin, and Billy Joe Saunders made their debuts in February at Birmingham's National Indoor Arena. Success in the amateurs offers no guarantee of a glorious career as a prizefighter, however, as Audley Harrison demonstrated and as Amir Khan has learned. David Haye scaled the heights at cruiserweight, but it is as a heavyweight that he will ultimately be judged. Froch looked set to defend the WBC super middleweight title against former middleweight champion Jermain Taylor as this issue went to press, and Calzaghe's stablemate, Enzo Maccarinelli, faces an uphill task to establish himself again at cruiserweight.

Hatton and Khan aside—as well as Haye to an extent because he is a heavyweight—no British boxer carries the crossover appeal that made Calzaghe a household name alongside soccer stars David Beckham and Wayne Rooney, Olympic cycling champion Sir Chris Hoy, and Formula One motor racing world champion Lewis Hamilton. His are a large pair of boots to be filled.

How much of a factor have chronic hand injuries played in determining the path of his career?

In the opening seconds against Chris Eubank in October 1997, Calzaghe unleashed a powerful left hand over the top that landed flush on Eubank's jaw and floored him. But over the years he began to throw this punch less and less while focusing his attack on fast flurries more and more. Bad hands were responsible.

"In tapes of my fights when I was younger I can see that I used to knock people out by loading up on my left hand over the top, but I stopped throwing that punch years ago," Calzaghe said. "When you let your left hand go, if it's not accurate, it can land on the top of the head and you can break your hand, especially when it's as vulnerable as mine was. That's why I started to throw more speed punches and I pulled out of a lot more fights than I wanted to. I boxed when my hands were injured as well, of course, but without a cortisone injection, I couldn't have fought a lot of my fights."

The problem stemmed chiefly from a sparring session at a local boxing club in Cwmbran, Wales, in 1989 when, after throwing a left hand, "a sharp, searing pain suddenly developed in my wrist, as if a knife had been put through it,"

PHOTO BY JARRETT BAKER/GETTY IMAGES

Calzaghe wraps his fragile hands for a gym workout while training for his November 2008 bout with Roy Jones at Madison Square Garden. The root of Calzaghe's hand problems go back to a 1987 sparing session that resulted in an injury he has never been able to shake.

Calzaghe revealed in his autobiography. "I had to be taken to the Royal Gwent Hospital in Newport where my wrist was X-rayed before the doctor came back to tell me that I had suffered an injury which would leave me with chronic, recurrent pain in my wrist. 'I don't think you'll ever be able to box again,' he said. Extensive tissue damage in the interosseous membrane, which holds the bones in proper position, caused injuries to recur over the course of his career and, effectively, Calzaghe had to develop alternative methods of punching to protect his hands when they became weakened.

What do his peers say of him?

Chad Dawson: "Timing is everything and to leave center stage at his peak is rare and certainly comparable to the retirements of Rocky Marciano and Jim Brown. Joe left on his own terms. What could be better? He held a title at super middleweight longer than anyone, successfully defended it a record 21 times (which Germany's Sven Ottke also accomplished, albeit without the climactic finale of major fights), unified the titles, and then moved up to light heavyweight to beat two future Hall of Famers. He has been a man for all seasons and will be an inspiration to me as I look to meet and beat his records."

Carl Froch: "It took Joe 10½ years to fight in the U.S. and 44 fights to win the title I hold (the WBC super middleweight belt). I respect Joe, but uninspiring wins over Bernard Hopkins and Roy Jones hardly make him a legend."

Ricky Hatton: "He beat everybody that they put in front of him. He's the best British fighter we've ever had."

Floyd Mayweather: "Calzaghe can box and I like watching him. The guy's a real champion."

Bernard Hopkins: "Joe Calzaghe is the luckiest boxer in the world. He comes here from Europe, gets knocked down by a living legend, and still gets a split decision. Flip the script: Do you think I would have got that kind of break in England? But after he's been retired for a while and starts to gain some weight around his middle, he's going to start telling the truth. He knows the sort of pressure there is being inside the ring with me. In fact, he's even said a couple of times that it was a very tough fight."

Why did he not move up to light heavyweight sooner?

In his final fight against Roy Jones—at 39 years old, a remnant of Jones—Calzaghe's body conveyed a strength and vitality that was lacking in his last fights at super middleweight. He retained searing hand speed, too, and the possibility that he may have performed better as a light heavyweight had he moved up sooner is tantalizing. In 2004, Calzaghe was scheduled to face Glen Johnson at light heavyweight, but the fight fell through when he suffered a back injury. A deal was agreed to face Johnson again in July 2006, but another hand injury resulted in him pulling out again.

"From the moment I beat Eubank, all I wanted was a unification fight," Calzaghe insisted. "I always wanted to fight the biggest names and I wanted to fight for more titles. I beat five former world titleholders just after they had lost their title. When Robin Reid and Richie Woodhall held the WBC title, I couldn't get a crack at them, but I did when they had no title to put on the line. Looking back, I think it was fate. I wasn't meant to have those title fights at that time and I wasn't meant to fight Johnson.

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/GETTY IMAGES

One of the main reasons Calzaghe delayed moving up to light heavyweight for so long is that he wanted to unify the 168-pound belts, which he did with his November 2007 victory over previously undefeated Mikkel Kessler. The match attracted more than 50,000 fans to Cardiff's Millennium Stadium.

For me, beating Mikkel Kessler and unifying the super middleweight titles in front of 50,000 people at the Millennium Stadium is 10 times bigger than fighting Johnson, a guy who has been beaten 12 times in any case. He's a good fighter, don't get me wrong, but he's not in the class of Kessler, who was a younger, undefeated fighter when I faced him and a guy who can dominate at super middleweight and light heavyweight now that I'm gone."

Does he really believe that boxing is dying?

In an interview last December to promote *Joe Calzaghe—My Life Story* on DVD, Calzaghe was quoted as saying, "I think boxing is a dying sport." Many boxing columnists seized upon the quote, and Calzaghe was branded an ingrate. The reality is that Calzaghe does not believe boxing is drawing its final few breaths (though wasn't it in May 2007 that Oscar De La Hoya and Floyd Mayweather engaged in what was referred to throughout the promotion as "The Fight To Save Boxing"?). In the same interview Calzaghe offered several examples of boxing's ills, which only the most insular of boxing people would argue are not damaging the sport.

"In America, for instance, you've got UFC, which has taken a lot from boxing, business-wise," Calzaghe said, referring to the mixed martial arts Ultimate Fighting Championship (only recently Golden Boy Promotions worked in association with Affliction to present Fedor Emelianenko against Andrei Arlovski in Anaheim, California). "There is too much politics in boxing, too many belts, and too many champions, which dilutes real champions like myself. There are four world champions in each division and it's bad because there are no stars any more. It's a big problem. America only had one medalist in the Olympics this year. In Britain, we did pretty good, but I'm glad I'm ending my career and not starting it, because I don't think it's going to be that great in the future."

If boxing cannot get its house in order, this may be true, in spite of there being quality fights and quality fighters. Impact in the overall sporting landscape as well as the market place is the issue.

"The point I was making is that boxing's significance has been diluted because of all the world titles," Calzaghe explained. "You have four guys calling themselves the world champion with no recognized process to make them fight one another. For instance, when I beat Kessler and won the WBA title, I was promoted instantly to something known as a 'super champion' while Kessler fought for the WBA title again and won it. Now tell me that's not harming the sport. It does boxing no favors, all these belts. It's all about money and governing bodies protecting their own interests. There should be one champion per division and then people would know who the champion is.

"An emerging sport like UFC is pulling in fans because the public can follow what's going on. In boxing, nobody knows who the champions are anymore. I would struggle to name more than five or six and there must be 60 or 70 titleholders at the moment. I don't even know how many there are. But I love boxing and it's given me the life I have today. It's because I care about it that I spoke out, but I guess I touched a raw nerve with some people."

How much of Calzaghe's success is down to his father and trainer, Enzo?

It was Enzo Calzaghe who opened the door into boxing for his son and held the keys throughout his career, training him for amateur success before he ever turned pro (Calzaghe won Amateur Boxing Association titles at welterweight, light middleweight,

PHOTO BY JOHN STILLWELL/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

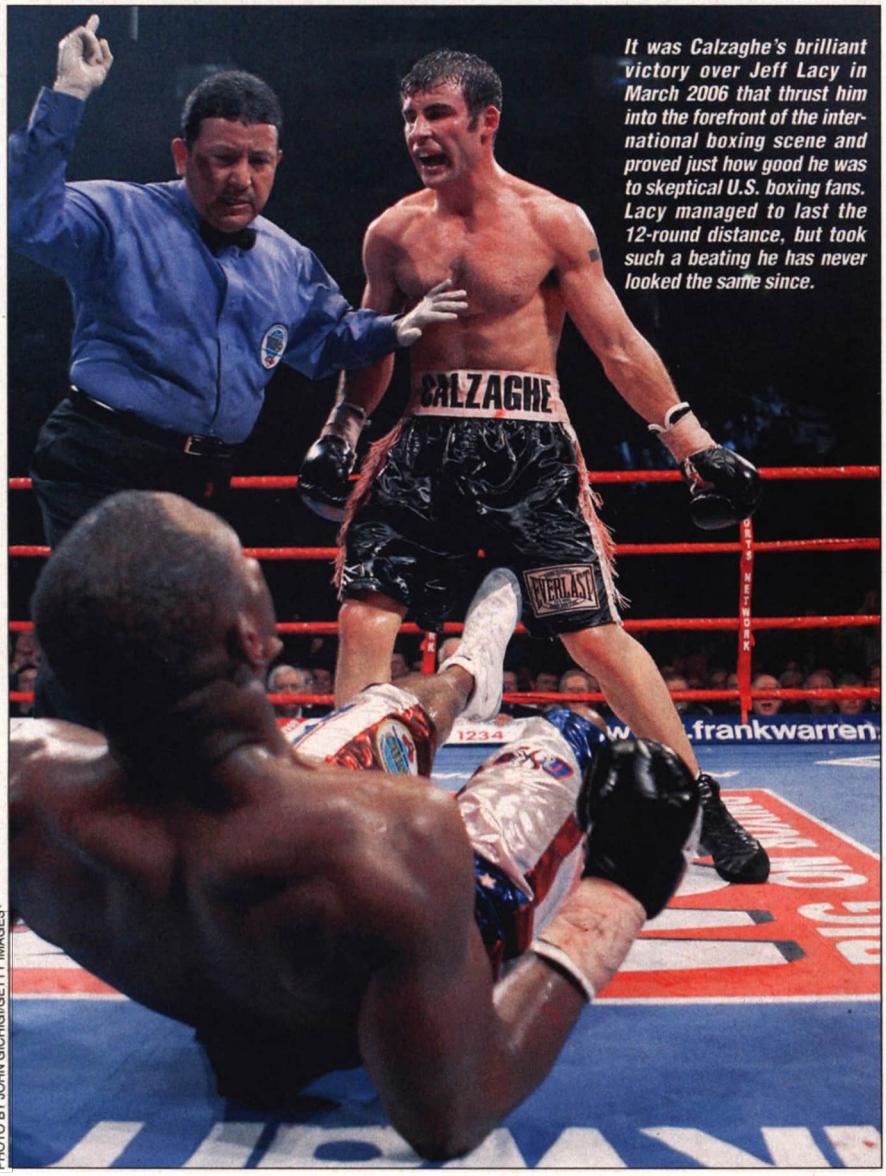
Calzaghe poses with the Commander of the British Empire medal he received from Britain's Queen Elizabeth II. He is accompanied by mother Jackie, girlfriend Jo-Emma, and father Enzo, who trained him throughout his undefeated career.

and middleweight in successive years, a British post-war record). When Calzaghe needed to be pushed, he could rely on his father to do it, and sometimes Enzo was able to dispel the doubts that could crowd his son's mind.

"Just take the Jeff Lacy fight, which I was going to pull out of because of another hand injury," Calzaghe recalled. "He told me, 'You will beat the crap out of Jeff Lacy. Believe me because you don't believe in yourself. It doesn't matter about your wrist. It doesn't matter that you haven't sparred. Listen to me: It doesn't matter. You're going to smash this guy. The guy is nothing, but you're going to be a laughingstock if you cry off with your wrist injury. They'll remember you as a f___ing chicken. Is that what you want?' My dad has this ability to get into my mind and he knows what buttons to press. Throughout my career he has kicked me up my ass when I needed it and he's been with me every step of the way. He's my blood, of course, but he's a great trainer in his own right and I owe him a lot for where I am today."

Which was the toughest fight of Calzaghe's career and why?

In October 1997, a 25-year-old Calzaghe was 22-0 (21) and, apart from two bouts that had lasted into the eighth round and another that entered the fifth, all of his fights had finished within four rounds, the majority in one or two. Chris Eubank, 31 and a former WBO titleholder



It was Calzaghe's brilliant victory over Jeff Lacy in March 2006 that thrust him into the forefront of the international boxing scene and proved just how good he was to skeptical U.S. boxing fans. Lacy managed to last the 12-round distance, but took such a beating he has never looked the same since.

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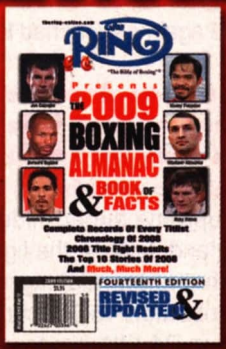

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at middleweight and super middleweight, was a veteran of brutal wars against Nigel Benn, Michael Watson, and Steve Collins, and he promised to take Calzaghe "into the trenches." He duly did.

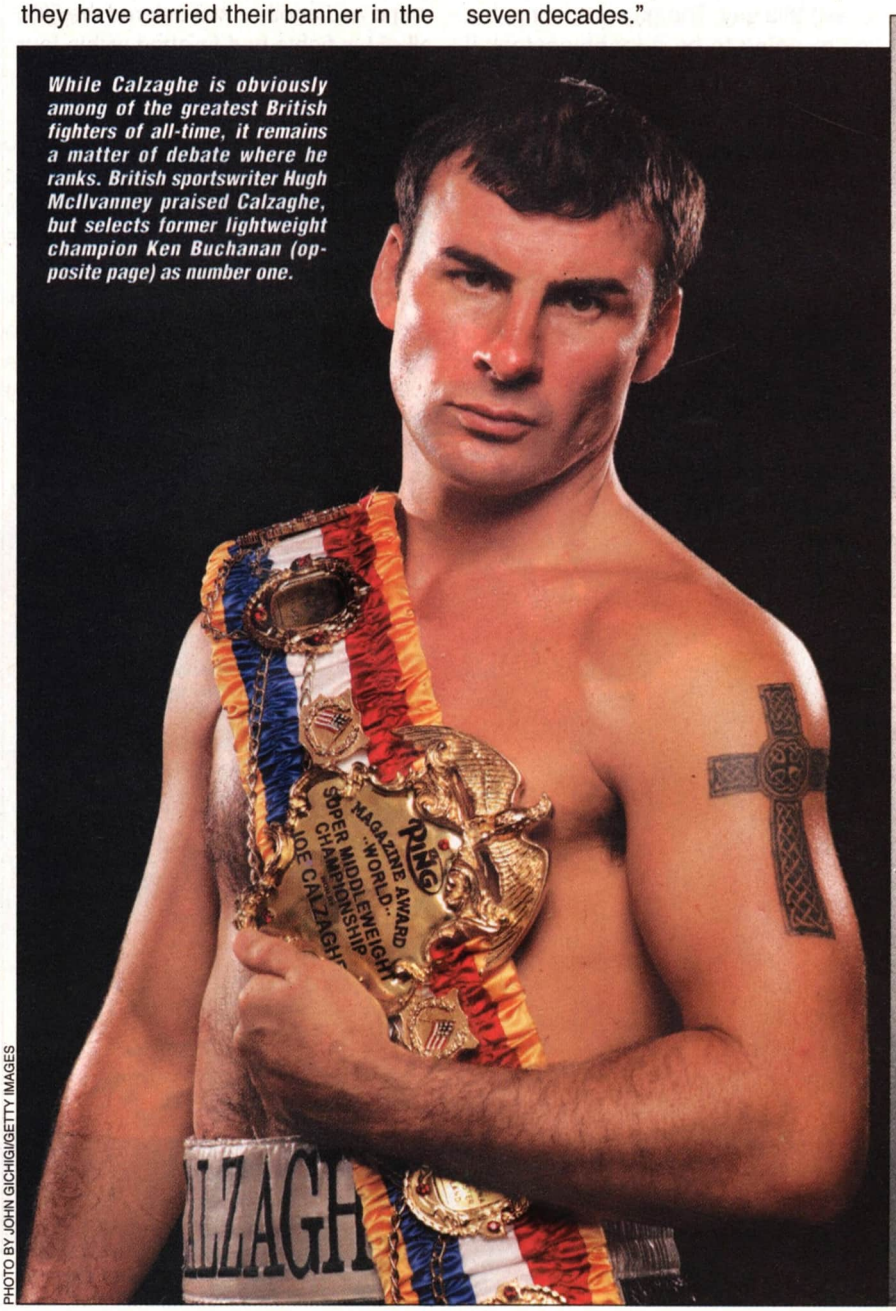
"Eubank wasn't the best fighter I ever boxed, not by a long way, but it was my first 12-round fight and I was utterly spent after six, seven rounds," Calzaghe said. "I had 18 stoppages in the first two rounds, and in the first round I knocked Eubank on his ass with a left hook to the chin and I went for broke when he got up. I was wild. I loaded up and for three rounds I just tried to knock him out, and I spent all my energy. Halfway through the fight I was knackered. But I kept plugging away. Dad kept shouting at me between rounds, and it was a tough, grim battle, definitely my hardest fight. It stood me in good stead for the rest of my career. Eubank told me that he would take me to a dark place and he did, so I knew I could go back there again if ever I had to."

What legacy does Calzaghe leave behind and where does he rate among Britain's all-time boxing greats?

The supreme super middleweight of his era and, latterly, the light heavyweight champion, Calzaghe retired with an unbeaten 46-0 record, having engaged in 24 title bouts. Statistics never tell the whole story, but for more than 18 years as an amateur and pro he beat every man he encountered, which says something. Alas, in an era in which the proliferation of titles has diminished the sport, he had to wait until his latter years to unify belts and taste his ultimate glory. But Calzaghe did not create the multitude of belts, boxing did and this is the problem that THE RING's championship policy is attempting—and, hopefully, succeeding—to redress.

"People can make up their own minds, but to be a champion for 11 years and still be undisputed super middleweight champion at 35 years old before going to America at 36 and beating two legends is a beautiful feeling," Calzaghe insisted. "Some people rate my fights and some people don't, that's their opinion. But I'm happy and content with what I've achieved in my career."

Calzaghe's achievements elevate him to within touching distance of the top British boxers in history, but Hugh McIlvanney, the doyen of British sportswriters, pondered recently how to "do suitable honor to the wonderful boxing career of Joe Calzaghe while paying a decent minimum of respect to that battered old punchbag, historical perspective ... Fighters should ultimately be judged by the company they have kept inside the ropes, by the level of threat they have overcome, and such assessments sometimes involve taking account of the boldness with which they have carried their banner in the most hostile places ... There can be no objection to the shrewd caution that has permeated his largely stay-at-home career, but it has relevance when the debate about Britain's best post-war boxer embraces, say, the contrasting experience of Ken Buchanan ... [Years ago] there was a moment in a Madison Square Garden elevator when an excited New Yorker told me Buchanan was the sweetest fighter he had seen since Sugar Ray Robinson. No doubt the man was getting carried away, but I am convinced he was talking about the best Britain has produced in the past seven decades."



While Calzaghe is obviously among of the greatest British fighters of all-time, it remains a matter of debate where he ranks. British sportswriter Hugh McIlvanney praised Calzaghe, but selects former lightweight champion Ken Buchanan (opposite page) as number one.

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/GETTY IMAGES

Will Calzaghe help his dad to train fighters?

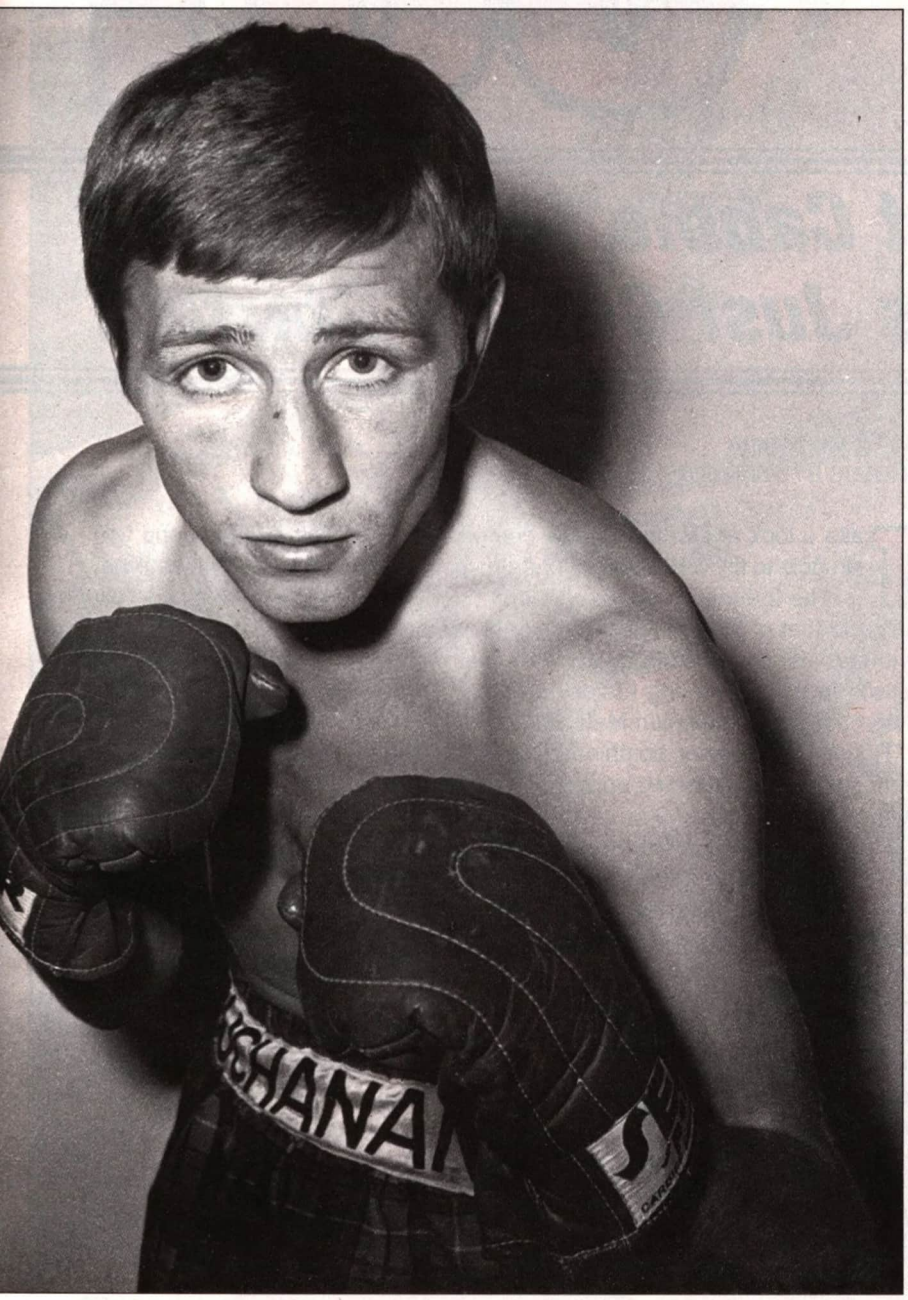
He remains a constant presence at the Newbridge Boxing Club, offering advice to the likes of Enzo Maccarrinelli, Gavin Rees, Bradley Pryce, and Kerry Hope, and he plans to apply for his trainer's license. With his father, Enzo, he staged his first show in Wales under the banner of Calzaghe Promotions on February 21, and there are a series of shows planned for throughout the year.

"I'll stayed involved in the gym and we'll see what way the promoting goes," he said. "If boxing is dying, then I'm in the wrong business, but I think and hope not."

Will he be elected into the Hall of Fame when he becomes eligible in 2014?

Err, yes, and it should be an interesting class. If Bernard Hopkins has also engaged in his last fight, he and Calzaghe could both be elected together. Now wouldn't this be an interesting reunion? ■

Brian Doogan is THE RING's European correspondent.



DON'T MISS WILLIAM DETTLOFF

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Always insightful and often provocative, William Dettloff, The Ring's senior writer, is the thinking-fans' columnist, a writer who never settles for the same old stale commentary you've already read a dozen times. For example, here's Dettloff's take on a handful of hot topics:

The effects of steroids: If steroids compelled men to kill their families, the terrible sound of James Toney, married father of six, slinging deviled eggs down his throat would right now be echoing throughout his otherwise silent, corpse-strewn house.

Post-fight interviews: If you too were wondering why Vic Darchinyan made no real sense five minutes after getting pancaked, consider that five minutes before, he'd gotten pancaked. Why are people always surprised when a fighter who's just suffered a concussion says nonsensical things?

The white stuff: If you've never seen (Alexander) Povetkin, picture mayonnaise in short pants and gloves. This guy is so white he makes Sultan Ibragimov look like Wesley Snipes.

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TOO LATE AT 38?

Heavyweight Cabbie Martin Rogan Feels He's Just Getting Started!

By Gavin Evans
PHOTOS BY JOHN GICHIGI/GETTY IMAGES

Take a look at Martin Rogan's craggy, well-worn fighter's face and you struggle to think of him as a 12-0 prospect on the cusp of a world ranking.

The friendly, good-humored manner of this 38-year-old is certainly closer to that of the Belfast cab driver he was until recently than the bruiser who had just prevailed in one of the most brutal and exciting heavyweight brawls in British boxing history—his 11th-round TKO of European and Commonwealth champion Matt Skelton.

Rogan's back-story, combined with his sudden arrival as a major league giant slayer, has attracted epithets like "The Irish Rocky" for this powerfully built, 6'3" tough guy.

His story begins in the fervently Republican Catholic suburb of Conard in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on May 1, 1971, just when "The Troubles" (as the conflict there was quaintly known) were heating up. The backbeat to his upbringing included the sound of bombs, gunfire, military helicopters, and British armored cars.

As the eighth of 10 children, Rogan eventually learned to look after himself, but his parents went all-out to divert their sons from the pull of the "armed struggle" and pushed them into Gaelic sports. He excelled in hurling (a cross between hockey and lacrosse, only faster and harder) and he played for his county at the under-21 level and then for one of the leading clubs in Belfast.

Hurling is a rough sport and Rogan, an attacking forward, could be a rough player. In one game he lost his temper after being whacked by a hurling stick and was sent off the field. This prompted one of his pals to propose giving boxing a try, a move he'd already considered.

Unlikely hero Rogan celebrates his upset victory over Matt Skelton at the NIA Arena in Birmingham. The 38-year-old Irishman has gone from taxicab driver to British Commonwealth champion in less than a year.

Defending Commonwealth titleholder Skelton landed some big punches during his exciting brawl with Rogan, but he could not floor the rugged Irishman, who has never been knocked down as a professional or amateur.

Rogan comes off the ropes with a face-distorting right to Skelton's jaw. It was blows such as this, combined with Rogan's non-stop style, that gradually wore down Skelton and earned the Irish slugger his 12th consecutive victory.

Referee John Keane leads Rogan to a neutral corner after he decked Skelton in the 11th round with a barrage of headshots. Skelton beat the count, but was hurt again by Rogan's follow-up flurry, forcing Keane to stop the fight.

"I'd been involved in fisticuffs growing up," said Rogan. "I wouldn't say I was a streetfighter, but I certainly had my share of fights and I always had it in my head that I could be a boxer."

And so, having just turned 28, he joined the Holy Trinity amateur club before switching to another club, Immaculata.

"Because I started as a senior heavyweight, there was no slow learning process," Rogan explained. "After just four fights I made the Ulster senior finals, and I went on to win two Ulster senior titles and one All-Ireland title."

He represented Ireland several times and once went for a month's training camp to Cuba. In the end, Rogan says, he had 30 amateur fights, winning 27.

Hoping to become an Irish professional champion, he handed in the amateur vest at the age of 33, working under the tuition of Belfast's leading trainer, John Breen, who had trained five WBC, WBA, and IBF titleholders and was known as one of the most astute tacticians and hardest taskmasters in the game. Breen is assisted by another Irish hard man, former junior welterweight contender Eamonn Magee.

Rogan's career started hopefully, when he fell under the promotional banner of Frank Warren's Sports Network, "but after a few fights, the contract ended and they didn't want to know anymore."

"At that time, Warren's team thought Martin was just too old," said Breen.

Breen, however, was immensely impressed with what his charge displayed in the gym.

"For one thing, he's very clean living," said Breen. "He's not a drinking man and once he starts training for a fight he won't touch a drink, and he's got a very good attitude and works really hard, which is why he can maintain such a high work rate. He can get difficult close to a fight, but basically he's a very easygoing guy, always cracking jokes in the gym and being jolly. He's a big, jovial fellow, but when he laces on those gloves he's got a never-say-die attitude, and superhuman self-belief, and he's got a very good chin. He can be hurt, but he'll come straight back. He's extremely strong, a good puncher, and he's very, very determined."

Still, after 3½ frustrating years, Rogan had managed just seven fights. To make ends meet, he continued his taxi driving, supplemented by the odd spot of film and television acting (always playing tough guys of one type or another). Along the way, he married the love of his life, Fiona, and they had a daughter, Jodi (now nearly six), and five years later, a son Ruben.

His unexpected run started last April when he signed up for Barry Hearn's "Prizefighter" tournament, which involved three, three-round fights in a single night for a £25,000 ($38,000) prize. With a young family to support, he saw the Prizefighter invitation as his last opportunity to make an impact.

"I just wanted to become something for myself and my wife and children," said Rogan "I wanted to be somebody to them so they could say, 'My dad's done something special.' So I knew the tournament was going to be the defining point and that I had to win it."

After two decisive wins, Rogan met the slick, unbeaten, 28-year-old former amateur star and pre-tournament favorite David Dolan. Rogan was badly cut early in the second round from a clash of heads and took some big, clean shots, but simply walked through

Harrison tested Rogan's chin with some meaty punches (above), but couldn't slow down his adversary. When Harrison grew weary of the fast pace, Rogan kept firing away to win a close decision over the former Olympic gold medalist (below).

them to take over and win clearly. "I was tired after those first two fights," he said, "but I knew he wouldn't be able to cope with my relentless pressure."

His victory, shown on terrestrial television, changed his fortunes, thereby reviving the interest of Sports Network. And his subsequent wins over Harrison and Skelton have made him a celebrity in Belfast and the rest of Ireland. Breen says Rogan is a figure of unity in Belfast. "Even though he's Catholic, he gets plenty of support from the Shankhill Road (a Unionist working class area). They all cheer for him."

Rogan, who fights in the green, white, and orange colors of the Irish flag, is adamant that this is not sign of partisan sympathies. "I grew up in a Catholic area, but I've always reached out to the Protestant communities as well," he said. "I box for both communities, and actually, if you look at the flag, it also includes the orange of the Unionist community."

The publicity the tournament victory generated prompted Warren to sign him up as an opponent for former Olympic super heavyweight gold medalist Audley Harrison, whose career he was attempting to revive.

"I think Frank wanted Audley to beat me so that he could push him toward a title fight, but I wasn't going to be a steppingstone for anyone," said Rogan.

Breen studied Harrison closely and saw that while the tall southpaw had the boxing skills to beat most heavyweights, he struggled with consistent pressure. They knew that to have a hope, Rogan would need to press him non-stop for every minute of the 10-rounder.

"I just kept going at him, throwing punches non-stop, pushing him onto the back foot, and he was forced to fight in retreat, because I hurt him on several occasions," said Rogan. "But it was never easy. He's 6'5" with a great right jab and he has quick, stinging punches. He hurt me a couple of times and he damaged my nose, but I have a great pain barrier and I've never been dropped, not in the amateurs or the pros. I refuse to be knocked down."

Unable to cope with the pace and

pressure, Harrison was forced to hold frequently, and conceded several close rounds. In the end, referee Ian John-Lewis (the lone scoring official) deservedly gave it to Rogan by a single point.

The win prompted Warren to put Rogan in with his other heavyweight hopeful, 42-year-old Skelton, who had looked impressive in his previous bout in winning the European title and was being maneuvered toward a second alphabet title shot (he'd dropped a decision to Ruslan Chagaev for the WBA belt 13 months earlier).

"Warren had promised a world title fight to Skelton and I assume they were thinking Martin would fall to him, but we were very confident," said Breen.

Looking sleek and muscular, Rogan came in lighter than usual at 225 pounds (22½ less than Skelton). "We worked on speed and work rate and it paid off," said Breen.

Rogan absorbed some huge hits, including a heavy hook and uppercut that knocked his head back in the third, but he kept attacking relentlessly and moved into the lead with his constant aggression, cutting Skelton and twice wobbling him.

After nine toe-to-toe rounds, Skelton started to box on the retreat, unable to keep up with the non-stop punching of the Irishman. In the 11th, Rogan met him ring center and blasted him with several meaty punches, driving the European champion to the canvas for the first time in his career. Skelton looked wobbly on rising and Rogan jumped on him, landing several more times until referee John Keane stepped in at the 1:21 mark, taking the Irishman's record to 12-0 (6).

"Skelton wanted to show me who was boss, but he didn't count on me being able to hit him back so hard and so often," said the new British Commonwealth heavyweight champ. "By the end he was exhausted."

To which Breen added: "In some ways Skelton was easier than Harrison. There were times when Martin was landing four out of every five punches he fired."

Rogan's next step could be to fight for the European title (not on line when Rogan beat Skelton), but Breen believes he could go even further.

Assistant trainer Eamonn Magee gives Rogan a congratulatory hug following the TKO of Skelton. If he continues to win, Rogan wants to headline the first boxing card at Dublin's Croke Park Stadium since Muhammad Ali fought Alvin Lewis in 1972.

"Give him another two or three fights and he'll be ready for a world title shot," the trainer said, "and it would be great if it happens over here because Martin is a very good ticket seller."

Rogan says his ultimate goal is to fight for a title at Dublin's Croke Park Stadium, which has a 90,000 capacity. "That would be a dream come true and Frank Warren said he'd look at it. The last boxer to fight there was Muhammad Ali, back in 1972. I don't mind who it would be against. In fact, I'd fight anyone in the top 10 right now."

Despite his victories over Harrison and Skelton, Rogan would certainly be the underdog against most of the contenders—lacking the finesse and technical skill of the best Europeans or the speed and athleticism of David Haye, although a brawl with Chris Arreola would be tasty.

For the moment, he has parked the taxi to become a full-time professional, but says he has no idea how long the ride will last. "I've still got my feet firmly on the ground," he said. "I'm just enjoying the journey, but the taxi is still there if I ever need it again, because you never know what will come next, do you?" ■

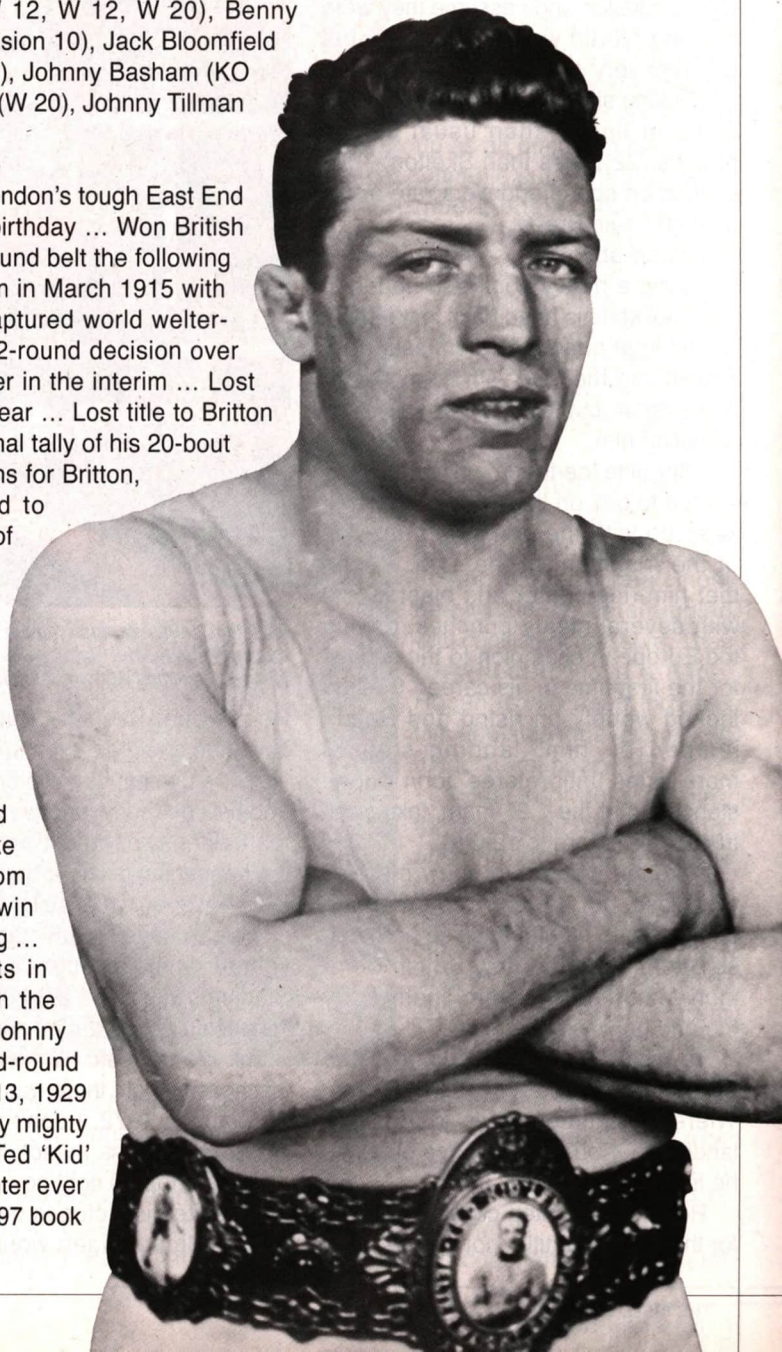
Gavin Evans is a British freelance writer and a regular contributor to THE RING.

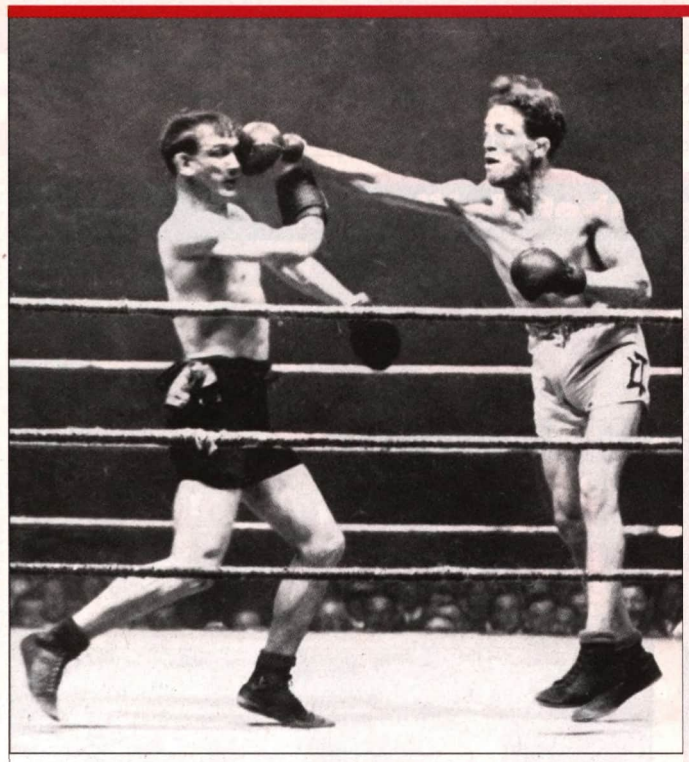
Hall of Fame Profile

THE RING features a thumbnail biography of a ring great who has received the ultimate honor: induction into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in Canastota, New York

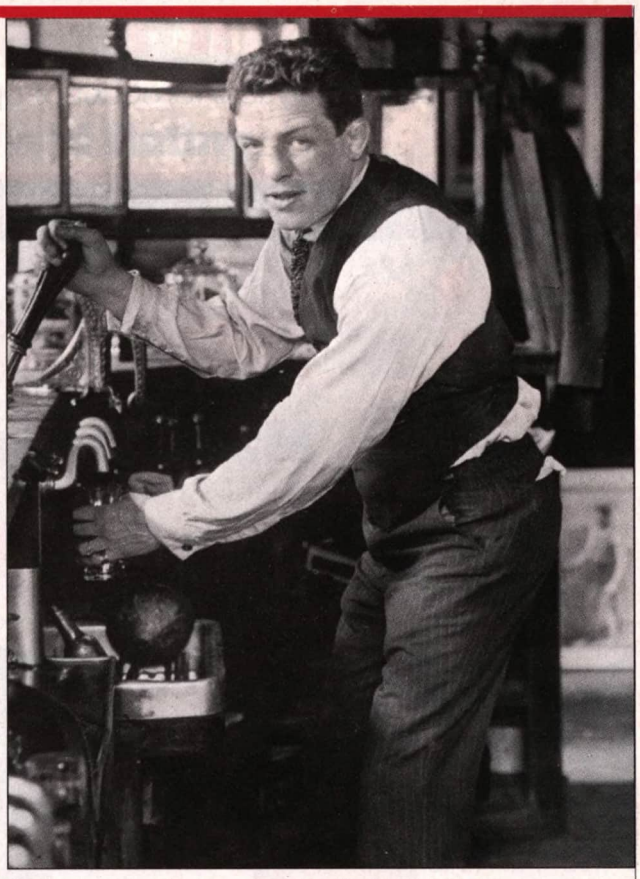
Ted "Kid" Lewis

Birthdate: October 24, 1894
Birthplace: London, England
Date of Death: October 20, 1970
Weight Classes: Flyweight through heavyweight
Professional Record: 173-30-14 (71) with 65 no-decisions
Title: World Welterweight (August 31, 1915-April 24, 1916; June 25, 1917-March 17, 1919)
Best Performances: Jack Britton (W 12, W 12, W 20), Benny Leonard (no-decision 10), Willie Ritchie (no-decision 10), Jack Bloomfield (W 20), Mike Glover (W 12), Roland Todd (W 20), Johnny Basham (KO 9, KO 19), Alec Lambert (KO 17), Johnny Brown (W 20), Johnny Tillman (W 20), Frankie Burns (KO 11)
Year of IBHOF Induction: 1992
Background: Born Gershon Mendeloff in London's tough East End ... Turned pro in 1909, shortly before his 15th birthday ... Won British featherweight title in 1913 and European 126-pound belt the following year ... Began legendary rivalry with Jack Britton in March 1915 with a 10-round no-decision in New York City ... Captured world welterweight championship later that year, winning 12-round decision over Britton, who had taken the title from Mike Glover in the interim ... Lost title to Britton in 1916, but regained it the next year ... Lost title to Britton again in 1919 via ninth-round knockout ... The final tally of his 20-bout series with Britton: three wins for Lewis, four wins for Britton, one draw, and 12 no-decisions ... Returned to England in 1920 following more than six years of campaigning in the United States ... By then he had morphed from the traditional jab-and-move British style into a more aggressive puncher. Film clips from that era show him moving around the ring with his hands low, looking for openings, and then leaping in with quick, hard shots to the head ... Won British and European welter titles 1920 ... Annexed British and European middleweight titles in '21 ... Suffered humiliating first-round kayo in an attempt to take the world light heavyweight championship from Georges Carpentier in '22 ... Rebounded to win British Empire middleweight title in his next outing ... Fought a pair of South African heavyweights in Johannesburg, knocking out Alec Storbeck in the opening round and boxing a 15-round draw with Johnny Squires ... Ended his 20-year career with a third-round TKO of old rival Johnny Basham on December 13, 1929 ... Died four days before his 77th birthday ... "Only mighty midget Jimmy Wilde could seriously dispute Ted 'Kid' Lewis' right to be recognized as the greatest fighter ever produced in Britain," wrote Patrick Myler in his 1997 book *A Century Of Boxing Greats*.

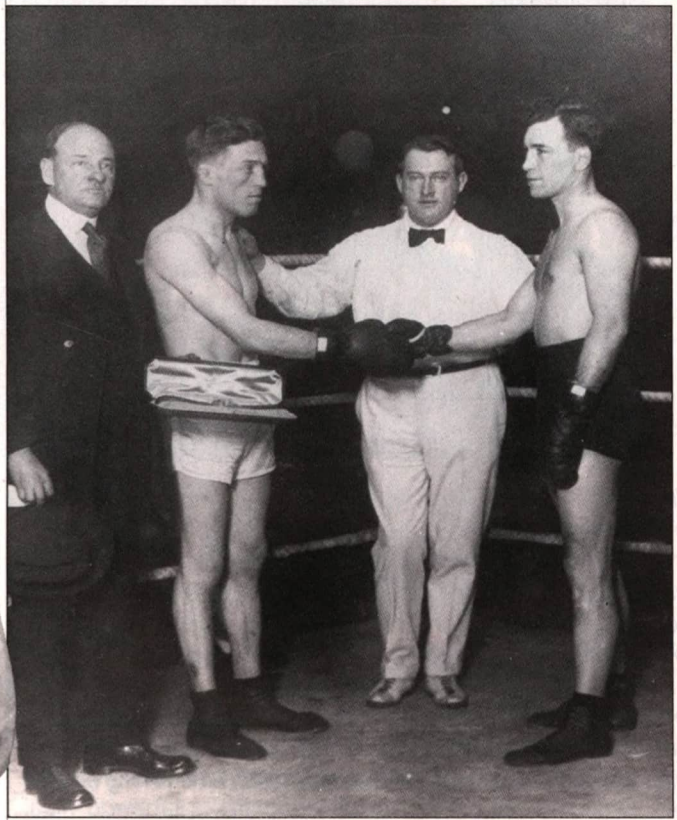




Lewis lands a long right to the head of Johnny Basham during a June 1920 bout in London. Lewis prevailed with a 19th-round knockout to retain the British welterweight title and win the European 147-pound belt. Note that both of Lewis' feet are off the canvas.



Lewis serves a drink at a pub he ran after his fighting days were over. He also managed a few fighters, refereed, appeared in a stage review called Hello Sweetie *and in bit parts in various movies, and once ran unsuccessfully for Parliament.*



Lewis and American arch-rival Jack Britton (right) shake hands prior to 1921 bout at Madison Square Garden. It was the final bout of their 20-fight series, in which Briton successfully defended the world welterweight title with a 15-round decision.

The grand old man of British boxing polishes one of his boxing trophies in 1962, eight years before his death.

Welterweight Alphabet Unification

Miguel Cotto

Main Event 12 Rounds

Joshua Clottey

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA/TOP RANK

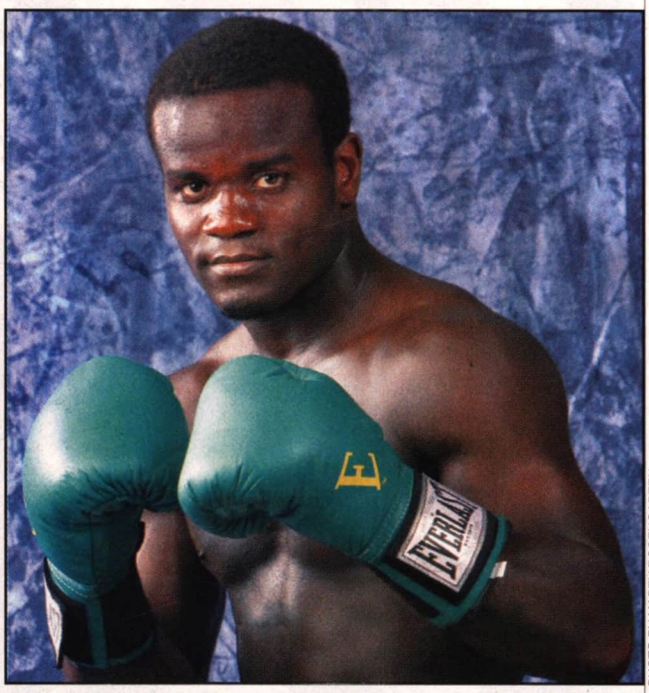


PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Some fighters never truly recover from their first loss. When that first defeat involves a significant amount of punishment (see Meldrick Taylor-Julio Cesar Chavez I), the decline can be even more rapid.

Miguel Cotto certainly took a beating in last summer's 11th-round knockout loss to Antonio Margarito. That result has since been questioned due to trainer Javier Capetillo getting caught tampering with Margarito's handwraps before Margarito's January loss to Shane Mosley. Maybe Cotto can now look back and put an asterisk next to his first loss, but the fact remains that he did lose and he did take punishment. And if the Puerto Rican star left something behind that night at the MGM Grand, Joshua Clottey is capable of exposing it.

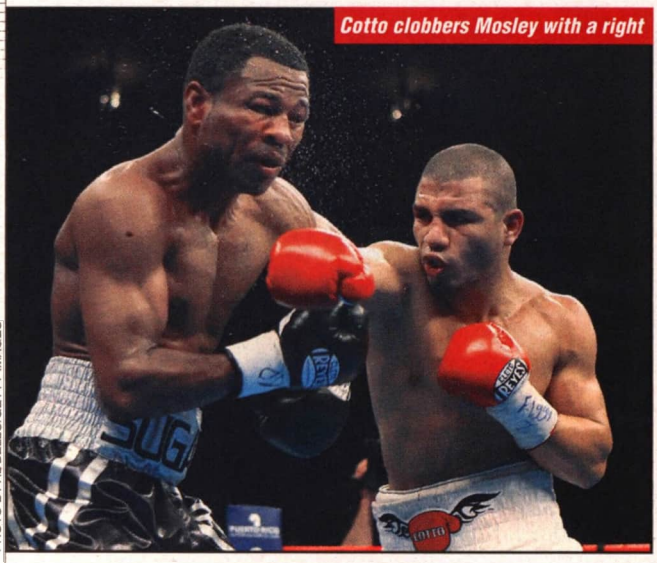
"The Hitter" has been clamoring for a fight of this magnitude for years. It's well deserved. He might have beaten Margarito in 2006, were it not for two hand injuries. Clottey came back with impressive wins against Diego Corrales and Zab Judah, and now he's landed his biggest fish to date in Cotto. If he doesn't capitalize, the New York-based Ghanaian has been around long enough to know he might not get another opportunity of this magnitude.

So can Cotto put the Margarito loss further behind him by beating a top-tier welterweight? Or will Clottey take advantage of somewhat damaged goods, or just simply prove he's at a higher level than most believe? We'll find out June 13 when the two alphabet beltholders meet at Madison Square Garden. HBO will televise.

Miguel Cotto

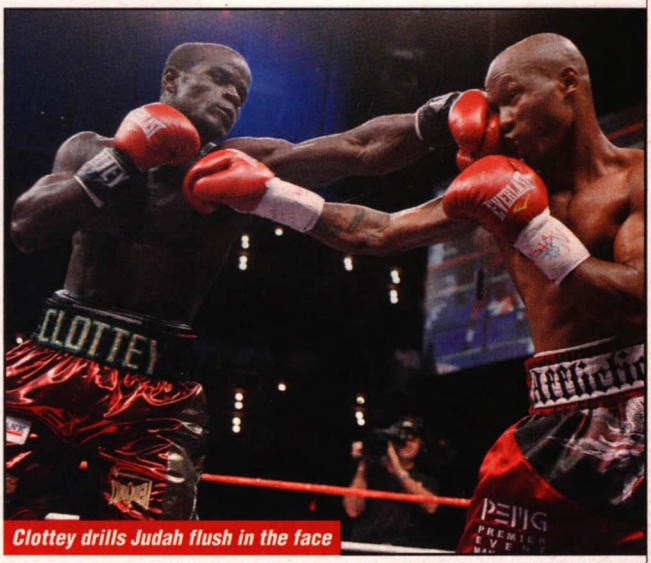
Joshua Clottey

Record and World Rating



Cotto clobbers Mosley with a right

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES



Clottey drills Judah flush in the face

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA/TOP RANK

Is 33-1 with 27 knockouts ... Amateur career included 125-23 record, four straight national titles, and 2000 Olympics ... Made pro debut in February '01 ... Won vacant WBO junior welterweight belt in September '04 ... Six successful defenses ... Won vacant WBA welterweight belt in December '06 ... Made four successful defenses before losing belt in July '08 ... Won vacant WBO welterweight belt in February '09 ... Rated number two at welterweight by THE RING.

Is 35-2 with 20 knockouts ... Began boxing in Ghana at age six ... Went 45-4 as amateur and fought in '94 Commonwealth Games ... Made pro debut in March '95 ... Nineteen of first 25 fights were in Africa. Other six were in London ... Failed to win WBO welterweight belt in December '06 ... Won vacant IBF welterweight belt in August '08 ... Rated number four at welterweight by THE RING.

Age and Physical Equipment

Cotto had to come off the floor to beat Torres

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Clottey did well against Margarito until he broke his hands

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

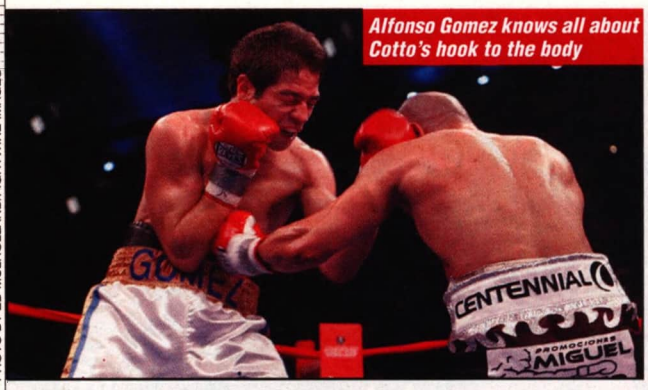
Is 28 years old ... Stands 5'7" with 67-inch reach ... Slightly below-average height for welterweight, but physically powerful ... Generally thick skin, but can bleed, as against Antonio Margarito ... Chin is biggest question mark ... Recovers relatively quickly when tagged, though ... Never shows up out of shape.

Is 32 years old ... Stands 5'8" with 70-inch reach ... Slender but muscular physique ... Hand and arm injuries are biggest concern ... Extremely durable with excellent chin ... Tremendous energy allows him to outwork opponents over latter half of fights ... Member of Ga tribe, which also produced Azumah Nelson, Ike Quartey, and Ben Tackie.

Miguel Cotto

Joshua Clottey

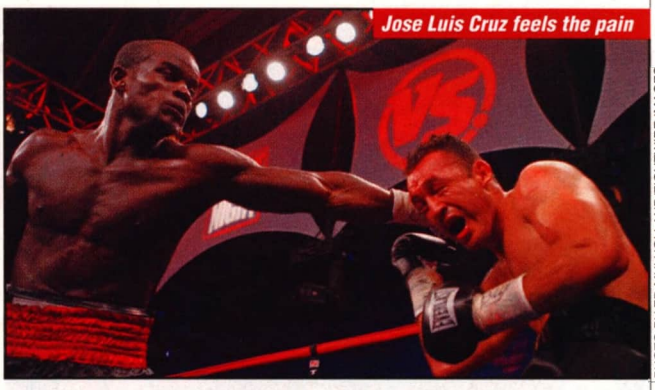
Best Weapons



Alfonso Gomez knows all about Cotto's hook to the body

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Has one of boxing's best left hooks, especially to body ... Excellent technical boxing skills complement power ... Hard, accurate jab ... Outstanding counterpunching ability ... Underrated hand and foot speed ... Proficient finisher when opponent is in trouble ... Poised under pressure.



Jose Luis Cruz feels the pain

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Best punch is left hook to body ... Arsenal also includes good left uppercut and straight right hand ... Superb accuracy ... Athletic footwork gets him into position to score ... Clever bodypuncher ... Delivers dangerous uppercuts on the inside ... Knows how to string together combinations.

Previous Fight

Hunted down and destroyed England's Michael Jennings in five rounds for bounce-back win in February at Madison Square Garden ... Slowed down Jennings' movement with bodyshots, bloodied his nose in fourth ... Scored two knockdowns late in fourth, then another in fifth before fight was stopped ... Was ahead 40-34 on all three cards at time of stoppage ... Landed 50 percent of shots (118 of 237), according to CompuBox, compared to Jennings' 15 percent (30 of 197).

Posted most significant win in taking nine-round technical decision against former world welterweight champion Zab Judah last August ... Applied steady pressure throughout. Broke Judah's nose in fourth. Opened large cut above Judah's left eye in ninth with uppercut ... Withstood quicker Judah's strong start ... Also overcame minor biceps injury suffered in fourth ... Fight went to cards due to Judah's cut. Clottey prevailed 87-84 and 86-85 (twice). THE RING had it 87-84 for Clottey.

Quality of Opposition

Has taken on best of deep welterweight division, including current top-10 contenders Shane Mosley (W 12), Margarito (KO by 11), Carlos Quintana (KO 5), and Judah (KO 11) ... Also fought several contenders at junior welterweight, including Paulie Malignaggi (W 12), Ricardo Torres (KO 7), DeMarcus Corley (KO 5), Randall Bailey (KO 6), Lovemore Ndou (W 12), Carlos Maussa (KO 8) ... Developed against vets Juan Angel Macias (44 bouts), Justin Juuko (43), Cesar Bazan (45), Joel Perez (41), and Rocky Martinez (47).

Built much of early record against shaky opposition in Ghana, Benin, Ivory Coast, and Togo ... In November '99, suffered 11th-round disqualification loss to future welterweight champ Carlos Baldomir. Was leading on cards when DQ'd for headbutts ... Moved to New York in late-'03, began fighting better opposition ... Injured both hands in competitive points loss to Margarito in December '06 ... Most significant win came vs. Judah ... Also beat notables Diego Corrales (W 10), Richard Gutierrez (W 12), and Shamone Alvarez (W 12).

Defense

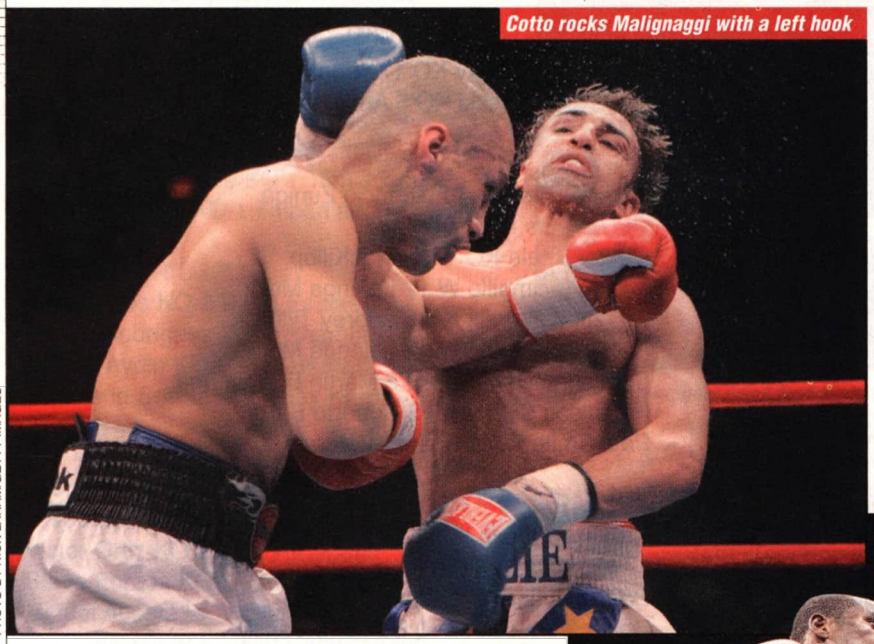
No wizard, but a bit underrated defensively ... Can be tagged when trading, but usually uses excellent footwork and upper-body movement to successfully avoid shots ... Proved to be susceptible to body attack against Margarito, who wore him down ... Shaky chin. Was buzzed by Mosley, Bailey, and Corley, floored by Torres ... Now holds hands higher, though Margarito brought them down with bodyshots.

Best skill might be ability to avoid punches ... Uses high-handed guard. Deflects punches off arms and elbows ... Compact ... Comes in low enough to avoid most bodyshots ... Also employs decent upper-body movement ... Has handled faster fighters such as Judah and Alvarez, though Judah had some success when working at rapid pace ... Chin has withstood punchers such as Margarito and Judah.

Miguel Cotto

Joshua Clottey

Style

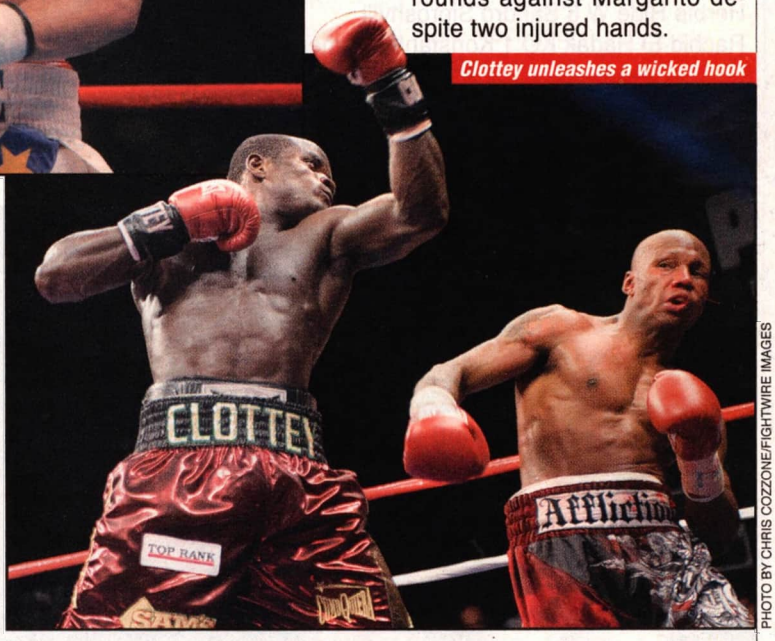


Cotto rocks Malignaggi with a left hook

PHOTO BY NICK LAHAM/GETTY IMAGES

Multi-dimensional: Switched to southpaw to beat Judah. Boxed his way past Mosley. Often wins with pressure, however ... Patient, stalking fighter who has good sense of when to attack ... Hits hard, but generally not one-punch knockout artist. Relentless pressure and bodywork lead to kayos ... Strong counterpuncher with quick reflexes and hand speed ... Employs good head movement on the attack.

Pressure fighter who attacks behind shell-like guard ... Will push action or drop back and counterpunch ... Methodical but aggressive. Not really a volume puncher, but tends to attack in quick surges ... Uses foot speed to create angles for shots ... Wears down opponents with help of body assault ... Never quits. Won last two rounds against Margarito despite two injured hands.



Clottey unleashes a wicked hook

PHOTO BY CHRIS COZZONE/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

The Questions

How much did the loss to Margarito shake his confidence? Did the physical beating he absorbed in that fight take anything out of him? How will he handle another bigger, all-out pressure fighter? Will he press too hard to look impressive for his New York fans?

Does he have enough power to keep Cotto off him? Can he fend off Cotto's body attack? He's faced some decent punchers before, but will his solid chin stand up to the power of Cotto? How will he perform in front of a large, likely hostile crowd?

The Outcome

The first three rounds are surprisingly sluggish as Cotto patiently feels Clottey out, while Clottey slowly works into his rhythm. He never finds it as Cotto adjusts to Clottey's pressure, forgoing the close-range war and electing to box instead. Cotto's better skill proves to be the difference as he boxes his way to a close-but-comfortable unanimous decision, with a late-rounds rally by Clottey making it somewhat interesting on the cards.

[Summary]

Heavyweights

Oleg Maskaev KO 1 Rich Boruff
Shane Cameron KO 11 Robert Davis
Ondrej Pala W 10 Konstantin Airich
Solomon Haumono D 10 Colin Wilson
Michael Kirby KO 9 Nathan Briggs
David Rodriguez KO 7 Manuel Pucheta
Francis Zulu KO 2 Jackson Nyirenda
Ashanti Jordan KO 3 Willie Perryman
Deontay Wilder KO 1 Shannon Gray

Cruiserweights

Ola Afolabi KO 9 Enzo Maccarinelli
Herbie Hide W 8 Sandro Siproshvili
Rachid El Hadak KO 1 Konstantin Semerdjiev

Light Heavyweights

Juergen Braehmer KO 5 Rachid Kanfouah
Tim Bell W 12 Sonni Angelo
Mariano Plotinsky KO 11 Thomas Ulrich
Aleksy Kuziemski KO 5 Armin Dollinger

Super Middleweights

Lucian Bute KO 4 Fulgencio Zuniga
(*Retains IBF Title*)
Daniel Geale KO 1 Ian MacKillop
Gabriel Campillo W 12 Lolenga Mock
Christian Pawlak KO 6 Andrey Tylilyuk
Gabriel Campillo W 12 Lolenga Mock
Sebastien Demers KO 5 Martin Berthiaume
Francisco Sierra KO 3 Roberto Baro
Paul Smith KO 2 Rashid Matumla

Middleweights

Arthur Abraham W 12 Lajuan Simon
(*Retains IBF Title*)
Danny Butler W 10 Carl Drake
Dominik Britsch W 10 Daniel Urbanski

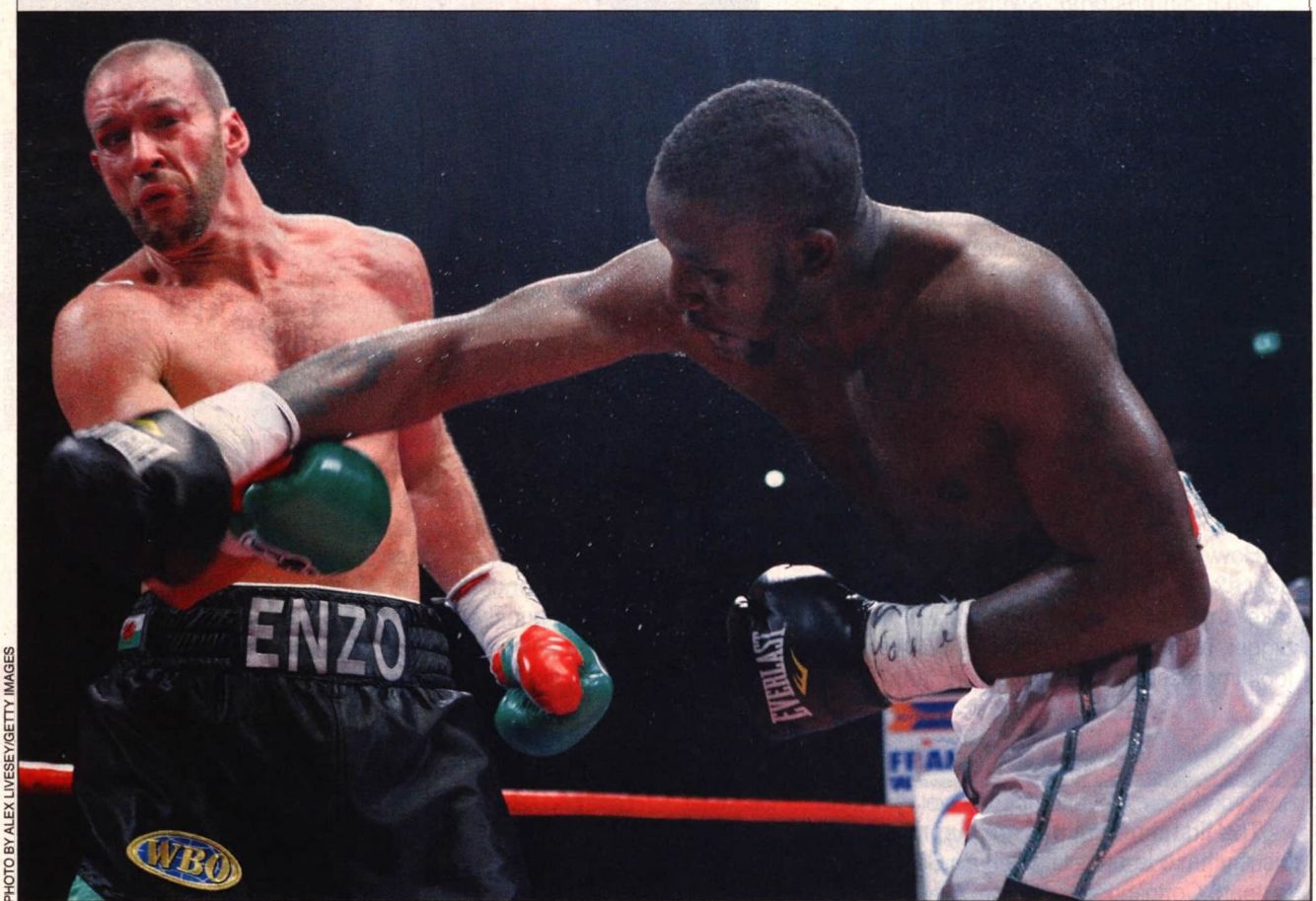


PHOTO BY ALEX LIVESEY/GETTY IMAGES

Cruiserweight Olo Afolabi gets Enzo Maccarinelli's attention with a sweeping right

Renan St. Juste KO 8 Roberto Reuque
Matthew Macklin KO 3 Wayne Elcock

Junior Middleweights

Matthew Hall KO 2 Bradley Pryce
Shannon McMahon W 12 David Wiremu
James Kirkland KO 6 Joel Julio
Austin Trout KO 4 Martin Avila
Jamie Moore KO 3 Michele Piccirillo
Demetrius Andrade KO 1 Tom Joseph
King Davidson KO 1 Faipaniang Kiatworawit

Welterweights

Mike Jones KO 2 Dairo Esalas
Delvin Rodriguez W 12 Shamone Alvarez
Selcuk Aydin KO 1 Luis Hernandez
Raymond Serrano W 6 Jay Krupp

Junior Welterweights

Leonardo Zappavigna W 12 Gairy St. Clair
Mike Alvarado KO 10 Emmanuel Clottey
Victor Ortiz KO 2 Mike Arnaoutis
Steve Forbes KO 2 Jason Davis
Miguel Acosta W 10 Dunis Linan
Martin Coggi KO 2 Juciel Nascimento
Jose Ramos KO 3 Hector Guzman

Lightweights

Amir Khan Tech. Win 5 Marco Antonio Barrera
Thai Tor Silachai W 12 Eddy Comaro
Robert Frankel W 10 Ricardo Dominguez
Luis Araguayan W 10 Ever Hernandez
Takehiro Shimada KO 4 Ameth Diaz
Guadalupe Rosales KO 4 Cristian Chavez
Martin Kristjansen KO 3 Ferenc Szabo
Enrique Colin KO 2 Jaime Maldonado

Junior Lightweights

Robert Guerrero No-Contest 2 Daud Yordan
Roman Martinez KO 4 Nicky Cook
Tony Fernandez W 10 Wagner Gonzalez
Hiroyuki Enoki KO 3 Ardi Diego
Ayup Arsaev W 10 Shavkat Madaminov
Jasper Seroka KO 6 Wandile Mseleku

Featherweights

Takahiro Aoh W 12 Oscar Larios
(*Wins WBC Title*)
Joksan Hernandez KO 10 Jonathan Arias
Ricky Sismundo W 10 Jake Verano
Arsen Martirosyan KO 3 Franklin Solis
Ramon Maas W 10 Uriel Barrera

Junior Featherweights

Zsolt Bedak W 12 Franklin Teran
Mark Quon W 10 Dean Livanos

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Super middleweight Lucian Bute sinks a left into Fulgencio Zuniga

Michael Domingo W 10 Monico Laurente
Sakai Jockygym KO 7 Joichiro Tatsuyoshi
Mahyar Monshipour KO 4 Felix Machado
Daniel Ruiz KO 3 Rodolfo Garay
Teon Kennedy W 8 Andre Wilson
Lisa Brown KO 3 Maribel Santana
Carlos Cuadras KO 1 Seksith Portitima

Bantamweights

Hozumi Hasegawa KO 1 Vusi Malinga
(*Retains WBC Title*)
Nehomar Cermeno W 12 Cristian Mijares
Z Gorres KO 7 Roberto Leyva
Galina Ivanova W 10 Oksana Vasilyeva
Eric Barcelona W 10 Aljun Salogaol
Billy Dib Tech. Win 8 Davey Browne
Fernando Verdugo KO 3 Cristian Rodriguez

Junior Bantamweights

Daiki Kameda KO 6 Wandee Singwancha
Juan Rosas KO 8 Reynaldo Cajina

Flyweights

Koki Kameda KO 2 Dolores Osorio
Brix Ray KO 10 Rey Migreno

Junior Flyweights

Giovanni Segura KO 4 Cesar Canchila
Juan Carlos Reveco KO 4 Wilson Simao
Julio Cesar Felix W 10 Felipe Rivas
Rollen Del Castillo W 10 Roldan Castrodes
Kosuke Takeichi W 10 Armando Torres
Yesica Bopp W 10 Jessica Chavez
Ria Ramnarine KO 8 Nancy Bonilla
Akira Yaegashi KO 3 Worawut Wor. Por. Sisaket

Strawweights

Milan Melindo W 10 Muhammad Rachman
Katsunari Takayama W 8 Romart Sentillas

Chris John D 12 Rocky Juarez

Houston, Texas: Part of the beauty of boxing is that it's diverse and international, and you don't know quite what to expect when a titlist from another country visits North America for the first time.

John stirred quite a bit of curiosity entering his American debut. The 29-year-old WBA featherweight beltholder had a glistening undefeated record, and a victory—though a controversial one—over Juan Manuel Marquez. But boxing fans outside of his native Indonesia knew very little about him, having hardly caught more than a brief YouTube glimpse. All they really knew was that John, 125½, Semarang, Indonesia, was taking his most serious risk since fighting Marquez by agreeing to face Juarez in the challenger's hometown of Houston.

Fighting in front of 14,571 raucous fans at the Toyota Center, John faced a tall task in his 10th title defense—partially because Juarez, 125½, is a dangerous young veteran, and partially because these were not the friendly confines of Indonesia.

John was up to the challenge. He used his long reach and pumped a strong jab and showed sound footwork. Juarez, meanwhile, demonstrated great tenacity, constantly moving forward and plowing through John's long reach. Juarez, 28, also had the advantage of the heavier hands.

From the outset, the crowd tried to inspire Juarez with chants of "Rocky! Rocky! Rocky!" Juarez did some good work early, particularly when digging to the body. But John countered back with his jab and mixed in a few overhand rights. By the middle rounds, John was clearly outworking Juarez and seemed to have fully taken control. It seemed he was well on his way to winning in his American debut.

But Juarez never gave up, and he was clearly the aggressor in the 11th and 12th rounds. John attempted to stave off the onslaught, but the 2000 U.S. Olympian bore in and scored with bodyshots that had John retreating. In the 12th, it was more of the same with Juarez landing right hands and a left hook that had John in trouble.

When the final bell sounded, Houston cheered for both fighters, and rightly so.

The cheering stopped, however, upon the announcement of the judges' scorecards. All three American judges, Tom Miller, Raul Caiz, and Gale Van Hoy, had it 114-114, as did THE RING. The draw enabled John to return home with the belt.

"It's a little disappointing because I thought I won and I wanted to bring a title to my hometown," Juarez, 28-4-1 (20), said afterward. "John fought a good, smart fight, but I gave away too many of the middle rounds. I thought I closed strong and started strong, but it was my fault in the middle rounds."

John thought he won, as did many at ringside. The rugged Indonesian had some tangible support. CompuBox numbers showed that he threw more punches (1,190 to 797) and had more connects (344 to 206).

"I thought I won the fight easy; I dominated," said John, 42-0-1 (22). "I showed I could handle Rocky. I didn't run. I would give him another fight. I'd have no problem with a rematch."

The referee was Laurence Cole (USA).

Television: **HBO**
Promoter: **Golden Boy Promotions**
(2-28-09)
Joseph Santoliquito

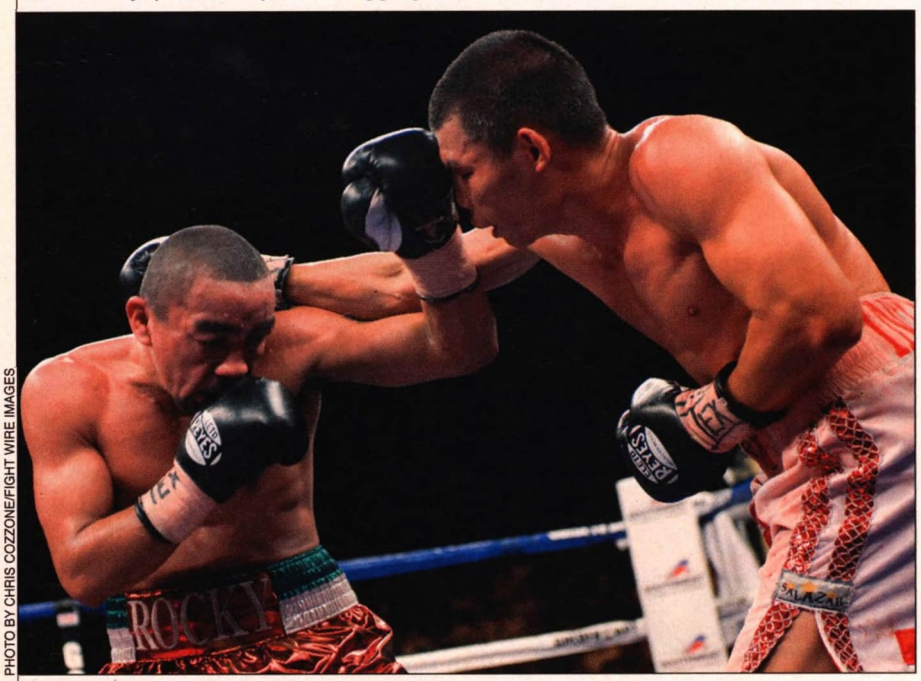


PHOTO BY CHRIS COZZONE/FIGHT WIRE IMAGES

Juarez and John mix it up during entertaining draw

Nate Campbell W 12 Ali Funeka

Sunrise, Florida: Throughout his nine-year career, Campbell has been nothing if not professional in his approach to the sport. So it was a shock to many observers when the 36-year-old Floridian became the latest in a recent string of lightweights to fail at the scales before an important fight.

Campbell came in at 137½, 2½ pounds over the limit, costing THE RING's number-one contender his three title belts. "The Galaxxy Warrior," who lost a payday last year when Joan Guzman failed to make weight, gamely agreed to go on and fight Funeka, 133½, the following night. He wound up showing plenty of grit in rallying for a majority decision over the 6'1" South African in their HBO *Boxing After Dark* main event.

"All my life I wanted to be a world champion, to be the best in the world at what I do," Campbell said afterward. "And I lost it on the scale. I want to apologize to my fans for that. I still fought like I was defending my titles."

Campbell, 33-5-1 (25), started aggressively and had the 30-year-old Funeka, 30-2-2 (25), backing up. He was poised to end it in the second when he dropped Funeka with a combination after landing a crushing overhand right to the temple. Funeka got up on shaky legs, but skillfully held on until the bell.

Still feeling the effects of his weight-loss battle, Campbell, who weighed 147 on fight night according to HBO's unofficial scales, began easing off in the third, which allowed the long-armed Funeka (149 on fight night) to clear his head and establish a rhythm. Funeka, who stopped Zahir Raheem last July to become an alphabet mandatory contender, began outhustling an increasingly sluggish Campbell from a distance through the middle rounds. Fighting mostly in spurts, Campbell faded in the sixth and seventh, and by the end of the ninth appeared to be spent.

Then Funeka, who was fighting outside of his native country for the first time, began to fade. Campbell started pushing forward in the 11th, when he connected with another big overhand right to the temple late in the round. The two became tangled and hit the floor together, but referee Tommy Kimmons (USA) correctly ruled that Funeka had been dropped. Campbell then outworked a tired Funeka to win the final round on all three cards.

Michael Pernick (USA) had it 115-111 and Benoit Roussel (Canada) scored it 114-112, both for Campbell, while Deon Dwarte (South Africa) saw it even at 113-113. THE RING agreed with Roussel's card. Funeka was the busier fighter, but according to CompuBox, landed 24 percent of his shots (227 of 938) compared to 39 percent (250 of 636) for Campbell.

[THE RING Fighter of the Month]

Juan Manuel Marquez

PHOTO BY CHRIS COZZONE/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

About three years ago, boxing experts reached the nearly unanimous conclusion that Juan Manuel Marquez was past his best and beginning the slow slide from boxing's peak. Fortunately for Marquez, the boxing experts don't always know what the heck they're talking about.

The Mexican master has never been more highly regarded than he is now at age 35, having ascended to number two on most pound-for-pound lists, and even to number one on a handful. Given his sensational knockout of young, hungry, talented Juan Diaz in February, it's easy to understand why some folks might think there isn't a better pugilist on the planet than Marquez. Against Diaz, it took him a few rounds to figure out how to combat his opponent's energy and rugged style, but like he always does, Marquez found the answers. And like he'd done quite a few times before, he found the punches to knock out an opponent who'd never previously been stopped.

If not for a debatable decision that went Manny Pacquiao's way last March, Marquez might have been Fighter of the Year in '08. Perhaps '09 will be his year instead. At the very least, he's an easy pick for Fighter of the Month.

Campbell said afterward that he planned to move up to 140 pounds, where he'll join a field already crowded with, among others, Manny Pacquiao, Ricky Hatton, Timothy Bradley, and Kendall Holt. He was reportedly close to leaving Don King for Golden Boy Promotions in early-March.

Promoter: **Don King Productions**
(2-14-09)

Sergio Martinez D 12 Kermit Cintron

Sunrise, Florida: What had been the most-anticipated matchup on the HBO *Boxing After Dark* tripleheader headlined by Campbell-Funeka turned into an odd, ugly, and controversial bout at the BankAtlantic Center. When it was over, Martinez, 153¼, had done nothing to help or hurt his position in the junior middleweight mix, while Cintron, 154, was likely headed back to welterweight with a gift draw.

Cintron, 30-2-1 (27), had not faced a southpaw since his 11th pro bout, in 2001, and it showed as he looked confused at how to cut off the ring against the elusive Martinez, 44-1-2 (24). After two slow, feeling-out rounds, the Spain-based Argentinean began to take control in the third by utilizing his superior hand and foot speed against Cintron.

Martinez, who like Cintron has only lost as a pro to Antonio Margarito, opened up a nasty cut above Cintron's left eye in the fifth with a left hand thrown at a sharp angle. He continued getting the better of the exchanges, with Cintron mostly throwing one punch at a time from the outside despite trainer Ronnie Shields pleading with him to mix it up. The bout saw plenty of clinching and holding and drew frequent boos.

At the close of the seventh, a big left to the chin stunned Cintron and sent him wobbling back into the ropes and onto a knee. Though he'd been hit with nothing but glove, the dazed Reading, Pennsylvania, resident argued with referee Frank Santore Jr. (USA) that he'd been headbutted. Santore didn't see a headbutt (because there wasn't one) and kept counting. Cintron appeared to lift his knee from the canvas just before Santore reached 10.

Santore's vague hand gesture, and the fact that he said "10," made it appear to everyone that the fight was over. However, Santore backpedaled, claiming he didn't hear the bell, which sounded during the count (though a fighter couldn't be saved by the bell under the rules of the bout, anyway), and that Cintron had risen at nine. So, in bizarre fashion, action resumed after a 2½-minute delay.

With both men angered by the debacle, an actual fight broke out. Cintron, 29, landed some of his hardest shots in the next three rounds as Martinez was more willing to mix it up, though Martinez was still landing more often. The 34-year-old clearly outworked Cintron in the 11th, then dominated the final round as Cintron, somehow thinking he was ahead, coasted. The former welterweight beltholder did pick up what proved to be a crucial point, however, when Santore penalized Martinez for hitting the back of Cintron's head, largely the result of Cintron ducking his head low throughout the fight.

According to CompuBox, Martinez dominated statistically: He landed 151 of 558 overall punches, along with 98 of 283 powershots, compared to 103 of 534 (overall) and 52 of 186 (power) for Cintron. Tom Kaczmarek (USA) agreed with most observers in scoring it 116-110 for Martinez. Ged O'Connor (USA) and Peter Trematerra (USA) had it 113-113, however. THE RING scored it 115-111 for Martinez, who kept his "interim" WBC super welter strap and remained in line, at least theoretically, for a shot at beltholder Vernon Forrest.

Promoter: **Don King Productions**
(2-14-09)

PHOTO BY JAVIEL CENTENO/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Martinez fires a left at Cintron

Alfredo Angulo KO 5 Cosme Rivera

Sunrise, Florida: After a chaotic couple of weeks in which potential opponents came and went like FOX network reality shows, rising junior middleweight Angulo, 153½, took out his frustrations by pounding late sub Rivera, 151½, until the overdue stoppage came with 24 seconds remaining in the fifth.

Angulo, Coachella, California, via Mexicali, Mexico, had initially been slated to face former welterweight champion Ricardo Mayorga in the main event of HBO's *Boxing After Dark* tripleheader at the BankAtlantic Center. But Mayorga pulled out less than two weeks beforehand with a dubious injury claim. (His promoter, Don King, later alleged that Mayorga was actually holding out for more money.) After trying to get *The Contender*

alumni Alfonso Gomez or Cornelius Bundrage as replacements, Angulo promoter Gary Shaw wound up with Danny Perez on one week's notice, but Perez dropped out three days later.

So the veteran Rivera, of Culiacan, Mexico, took the bout on four days' notice, and HBO moved it from the main event to the opening fight of the tripleheader. Rivera, 31-12-2 (22), gave a courageous effort, landing some shots through the sloppy defense of the ever-aggressive "Perro," but was ultimately outsized and outgunned.

Fighting through a cut over his right eye caused by an accidental headbutt in the first round, which was mistakenly ruled to have been the result of a punch by referee Telis Assimenios (USA), the 26-year-old Angulo pelted his 32-year-old opponent with right hands throughout. Rivera did a decent job keeping Angulo, 15-0 (12), off him with his jab in the first round-and-a-half, but the 2004 Mexican Olympian effectively closed the gap and battered Rivera on the inside late in the second.

Mixing in a solid left hook, Angulo had Rivera badly hurt throughout the third, but couldn't finish off the veteran fringe contender, whose only previous knockout loss came when Zab Judah blew him out in three rounds in 2005. The one-sided beating continued in the fourth and fifth, despite Rivera re-opening Angulo's cut in the fourth. With Assimenios and Rivera's corner apparently content to let the fighter take more unnecessary punishment, the bout was finally halted when a state commission official jumped on the apron late in the fifth.

Angulo had re-hydrated back up to 165 pounds on fight night, according to HBO's scales, while Rivera entered the ring at 150. This told part of the story, but size aside, the younger man was just too determined and talented for Rivera, who has now lost five of his last nine. Angulo landed a ridiculous 46 percent of his shots (217 of 467) according to CompuBox, en route to his 11th straight knockout.

Promoter: **Don King Productions**

(2-14-09)

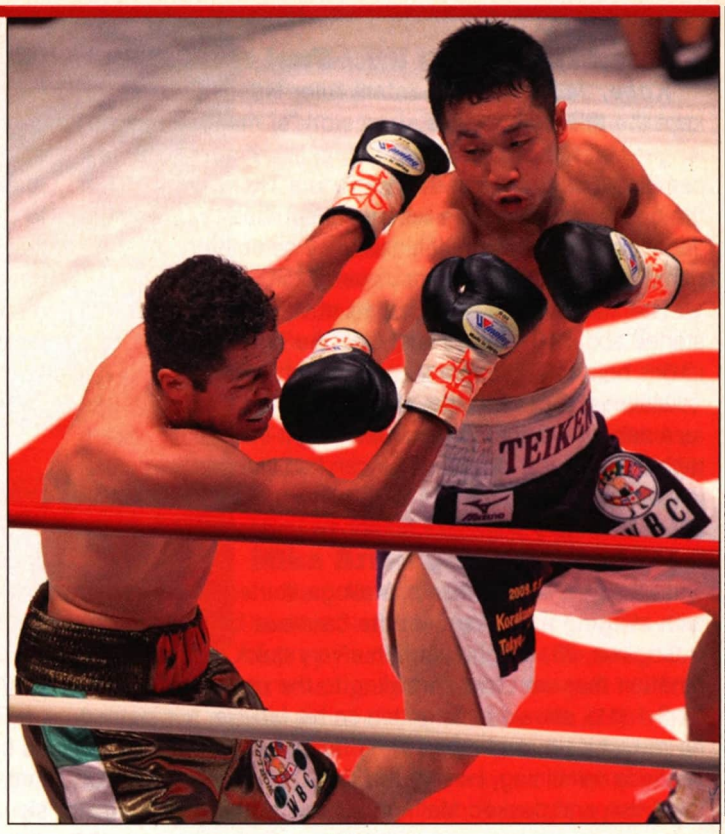


PHOTO BY TOSHIFUMI KITAMURA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Aoh splits Larios' guard en route to alphabet strap

Takahiro Aoh W 12 Oscar Larios

Tokyo, Japan: Japanese lefty prospect Aoh, 126, impressively captured the WBC featherweight belt as he aggressively battered Mexican warrior Larios, 126, all the way and dropped him in the final session to score a unanimous decision over 12 lopsided rounds at Korakuen Hall. This was a highly anticipated rematch to a bout last October that ended with a controversial split decision (114-112, 115-111, and 112-114) for Larios.

This time around, Aoh didn't leave any room for controversy. Even before the official verdict was announced, the 32-year-old Larios went to his 24-year-old rival's corner and raised his hand.

The much faster Aoh dominated almost every round, since Larios failed to show his usual zip and aggressiveness. Larios, typically known as a fast starter, began cautiously, probably wary of Aoh's southpaw counters. As a result, Aoh won the first four rounds with ease, and the open scoring system showed him to be ahead 40-36 on all cards after the fourth.

Aoh, usually a shifty boxer, instead stood toe-to-toe and tried to overpower the veteran Mexican. The strategy was clearly successful. Larios threw more punches in the sixth and won that round, but otherwise, Aoh continued to have it all his way. After the eighth, the official tallies were 79-73 (twice) and 78-74.

Entering the championship rounds, Jose Reynoso, Larios' manager, cried out, "You must knock him out to win!" But Larios couldn't go forward. He remained reluctant, Aoh's power on his mind, and Aoh pressed forward. Midway through the 12th and final round, Larios, 64-6-1 (40), absorbed a good combination and temporarily lost his equilibrium, resulting in a knockdown to seal the title change.

Judge Gale Van Hoy (USA) scored it 119-107, Massimo Barrovecchio (Italy) had it 118-109, and Anek Hongtongkam (Thailand) tallied 116-111, all for Aoh. Referee Kenny Bayless (USA) officially raised Aoh's hand after Larios unofficially did so.

Aoh, 17-1-1 (8), cried for joy, breathlessly saying, "Thank you, Father and Mother."

Promoter: **Teiken Promotions**

(3-12-09)

Joe Koizumi

Hozumi Hasegawa KO 1 Vusi Malinga

Kobe, Japan: WBC bantam ruler Hasegawa, 117¾, kept the title as he made short work of mandatory challenger Malinga, 115½, South Africa, flooring him with fast combinations three times en route to a TKO win at 2:37 of the opening session in a contest of southpaws. It was the Japanese titlist's eighth defense since he dethroned Veeraphol Sahaprom via unanimous verdict in 2005.

The Hasegawa-Malinga fight at World Memorial Hall started about 10 minutes later than the Takahiro Aoh-Oscar Larios bout in Tokyo, but it ended much earlier.

Malinga, a descendant of the Zulu tribe, was regarded as a dangerous challenger with an eight-inch reach advantage. The 29-year-old South African had stopped Veeraphol in four lopsided rounds in a WBC eliminator in Thailand last June. Malinga's sickle-like southpaw uppercut was known to be a haymaker.

In the opening moments, Malinga started well, scoring with stinging rights against the cautious beltholder. But Hasegawa, 28, caught him with a very quick right-left combination that sent him sprawling to the canvas. Malinga, 18-3-1 (11), should have gotten on his bicycle, but instead he mixed it up, and down went he again. With some 30 seconds remaining, Hasegawa, 26-2 (10), went all out for the finish and decked Malinga with a beautiful left cross. Referee Laurence Cole (USA) wisely declared a halt, even though the three-knockdown rule wasn't in effect.

The jubilant victor, who has now registered his last three defenses all within the distance (Cristian Faccio in two and Alejandro Valdez in two), apologized for his quick stoppage to the spectators. "I wished to show more and feel sorry that I finished it too early," he said. Maybe the fans would have liked to see more action, but at least they got the result they wanted. Certainly, Hasegawa had nothing to feel sorry about.

Promoter: **Shinsei Promotions**
(3-12-09)
Joe Koizumi

PHOTO BY STR/AFP/GETTY IMAGESW

Hasegawa dispatches Malinga in the opening round

James Kirkland KO 6 Joel Julio

San Jose, California: Some hot prospects become champions, and others just become former hot prospects. In a battle of 24-year-olds, Kirkland remained on the path toward the former with a TKO victory, while Julio suffered his second loss in a row and his third in less than three years to complete his transition to the latter category.

The bout at The Tank appeared competitive on paper, as both fighters are terrific punchers and it was thought that Julio had the skill to offset some of Kirkland's aggression. But once the bell rang, southpaw Kirkland, 153, Austin, Texas, stormed across the ring firing hard left hands to the body and head and simply never let up. Julio, 154, Monteria, Colombia, was immediately forced into retreat, using every inch of the ring to try, mostly in vain, to find the distance to let his powerpunches go. Scenes like this one from the opening round were common: Kirkland lands a crunching left along the ropes, Julio takes it and scores with a flush right hand in return, and Kirkland takes it and swarms in with a combination that Julio can't answer. Making matters worse for Julio, he suffered a cut over the right eye from a punch with 30 seconds left in the first round.

The action was good, but the growing sense that the Colombian couldn't win diminished the excitement. The fans were treated to a fiery exchange early in the third round, ending with Kirkland landing a left hand that convinced Julio to disengage. Julio provided a response later in the round, landing a straight right that seemed to momentarily buzz "The Mandingo Warrior." That set off an exchange of serious bombs to cap off what was definitely Julio's best round of the fight.

The battle got momentarily ugly in the fourth when referee Raul Caiz Jr. (USA) warned Kirkland for hitting behind the head and then Kirkland proceeded to hit Julio on the break as the action was resuming. Neither man landed any telling blows in the round, but one thing was

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Kirkland overpowers Julio for 25th consecutive victory

clear: Kirkland was as fresh as when the fight began, whereas Julio was slowing down and holding quite a bit.

From the start of round five, the rout was on. Julio's right eye was becoming messy, and Kirkland was scoring with an assortment of powershots and even mixing in some stiff jabs, a punch he hadn't used much up until then. Julio's legs were fading quickly, and it was no longer a question of whether, but rather when, Kirkland would stop him. The Texan landed a beautiful straight left in close early in round six, and kept applying relentless pressure while Julio was in pure survival mode. Late in the round, Kirkland scored with several clubbing left hands, and a bleeding Julio, showing a strong chin, held on and made it to the bell on his feet. At the end of the round, however, his corner wisely stopped the bout, understanding that Kirkland had beaten the desire to win out of their fighter.

"My game is to get on them and stay on them, and come in with the right kind of mindset, the mindset of a warrior," said Kirkland, 25-0 (22). "I expected Julio to run because I think I'm a harder puncher than him. I saw that the more pressure I put on him and the more bodypunches I put on him, I could tell that eventually he would go down."

"That was a tough fight, but I think training camp was tougher than that," added Kirkland's chief second, retired female fighter Ann Wolfe.

There was talk afterward of Kirkland fighting on the May 2 Ricky Hatton-Manny Pacquiao pay-per-view undercard, and then possibly getting in the ring again on June 27 against alphabet titlist Sergei Dzindziruk.

For Julio, talk about what the future holds is decidedly less positive.

"I hit him so hard and thought I had him, but he has a great chin," said Julio, 34-3 (31). "I'm very sad, but I put in a good effort."

Julio might drop down to welterweight, where his punches have generally been more effective.

Television: **HBO**
Promoters: **Golden Boy Promotions, Main Events, All-Star Boxing**
(3-7-09)

Victor Ortiz KO 2
Mike Arnaoutis

San Jose, California: Having easily beaten Carlos Maussa in one round and Jeffrey Resto in two, mega-prospect Ortiz was thought to be looking at his first serious test against Arnaoutis, a two-time title challenger who'd lost over the distance to both Kendall Holt and Ricardo Torres. It didn't pan out that way, as "Mighty Mike" lasted only eight seconds longer than Resto did against the 22-year-old from Oxnard, California.

Both Ortiz, 140, and Arnaoutis, 140, Atlantic City, New Jersey, fought cautiously in the opening round of this battle of lefties at The Tank. A nice 1-2 combination by "Vicious Victor" late in the round, coupled with the fact that, according to CompuBox, Arnaoutis landed only two punches, made it Ortiz' round.

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

"Vicious Victor" makes quick work of "Mighty Mike"

Ortiz stepped it up early in round two, scoring with another jab-straight left combination. About a minute later, Arnaoutis, 29, threw a lazy right hand, and Ortiz came over the top with a flush left hand, dazing the Greek fighter, who turned halfway around and stumbled into the corner. Ortiz pounced with a barrage of heavy shots. The first few punches missed, but a right hook, a right uppercut, and a left cross all landed flush, the uppercut making the legs of Arnaoutis, 21-3-1 (10), dip, and ref Ray Balewicz (USA) called a halt at 1:27 of the round. Arguments could be made that the stoppage came at the perfect moment or that it was a punch or two early.

"Mike is a good fighter, but I've been training hard and progressing well, and I'm looking for the next step," said Ortiz, 24-1-1 (19). That next step could be an alphabet title shot against Andreas Kotelnik on June 27.

Television: **HBO**
Promoters: **Golden Boy Promotions, Star Boxing**
(3-7-09)

PHOTO BY FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Guerrero's cut led to unsatisfactory outcome

Robert Guerrero No-Contest 2 Daud Yordan

San Jose, California: An announced crowd of 6,765 turned The Tank into a "Ghost" town in support of local star Guerrero, but a suspect decision by Guerrero to abort the fight early made it a highly disappointing night for the fans. Though this 10-round junior lightweight bout wasn't the main event of the HBO-televised card, it was clearly the main attraction for the paying customers, and after Guerrero was cut badly by a clash of heads midway through the second round, he earned plenty of criticism by opting not to give those customers their money's worth.

This was the second fight for Guerrero, 130, Gilroy, California, since vacating his featherweight belt and moving up, and the 25-year-old's first fight ever on HBO (after a couple of HBO Pay-Per-View undercard bouts). The Ghost's opponent, 21-year-old Indonesian "Chino" Yordan, was an unknown quantity. He brought an undefeated record into the fight, but it was built in Indonesia and Singapore, with the exception of one eight-rounder in Las Vegas in 2008.

As it turned out, Yordan, 129, wasn't bad at all. His fists were quicker than Guerrero's, and though he was doing a little too much holding for most observers' tastes, he also was landing quite a few punches. He landed a blazing right-left combination in the waning moments of the first round that earned him Guerrero's attention and may have earned the visiting fighter the round.

The southpaw Guerrero scored with a clean right hook in the midst of an exchange early in the second, but he was soon caught by another excellent right-left by Yordan. It was clear Guerrero was going to have to shift into his next gear in order to emerge with a victory over the determined underdog, but before either fighter had a chance to find another gear, they banged heads and The Ghost emerged with a bad cut on his right eyebrow.

Referee Jon Schorle (USA) immediately called a timeout to have the doctor look at the cut, and Guerrero told both the doctor and the ref that he couldn't see out of the eye. Neither official seemed to believe the fight needed to end, but Schorle said he had no choice but to stop it if Guerrero said he couldn't see. The fight went into the books as a no-contest at 1:47 of the second round.

"I'm so disappointed," Guerrero said afterward. "I was cut, and I couldn't see anything. I was doing good, and felt I was getting a lot of bodyshots in. I was here in front of my hometown fans. This feels terrible."

Guerrero, 23-1-1 (16) with 2 no-contests, made a rational decision to avoid fighting at a disadvantage and risking a loss or further injury, but boxing fans aren't always impressed by rational decisions. When his cut heals, there will likely be pressure on Guerrero to give Yordan, 23-0 (17) with 1 no-contest, a rematch.

Promoters: **Golden Boy Promotions, Samson Promotions**
(3-7-09)

Glen Johnson W 10 Daniel Judah

Hollywood, Florida: Sometimes there are just enough plotlines to make a mismatch palatable, and that was the case with Johnson vs. Judah at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino. Even at age 40, Johnson is one of the top two or three 175-pounders in the world, and the

31-year-old Judah is a non-threatening trialhorse who'd lost three of his previous six. But because the two had fought to a highly controversial draw in 2003, thought by most ringsiders to have been a fight Johnson deserved to win clearly, a rematch was justifiable. This time around, the result was without controversy, Johnson winning a near-shutout decision over 10 rounds.

It was a reasonable way for Johnson, 175¼, Miami, Florida, via Clarendon, Jamaica, to keep sharp while he waits for a bigger fight to come his way. He set the tone in the first round with effective rights to the body, and late in the stanza he floored Judah, 175, Brooklyn, New York, with a right hand to the head. Judah, the two-months-older half-brother of Zab Judah, easily beat the count of referee Tommy Kimmons (USA), but he was behind in the fight already and would never threaten to catch up.

"The Road Warrior" (who has actually fought five of his last six bouts near home in Florida) kept a tremendous pace for an older fighter, and to accompany his steady stream of bodyshots, he momentarily stunned Judah in the second round with a right uppercut to the chin.

Judah's best round was the fourth, when he found the right distance to land a few clean shots. Johnson got right back to business in the fifth and had an especially strong sixth round, scoring with left hooks to the body and rocking Judah late in the round with a couple of right hands to the head.

The only noteworthy moment down the stretch came when the fighters banged heads in the 10th. Judah, 23-4-3 (10), was hurt and needed time to recover, after which Johnson recommenced chasing him down and banging combinations to the body.

Judges Rocky Young (USA) and Mike Ross (USA) both scored it 99-90 for Johnson, while Michael Pernick (USA) saw it 99-89.

Johnson, 49-12-2 (33), is a mandatory for an alphabet belt held by Adrian Diaconu, but what he really wants is a rematch with titlist Chad Dawson, to whom he lost a debatable decision last April.

Television: **ESPN2**
Promoter: **Seminole Warriors Boxing**
(2-27-09)

Cristobal Cruz W 12 Cyril Thomas

Saint Quentin, France: With 11 defeats on his record, Cruz, 124¾, Tijuana, Mexico, is not the likeliest of candidates to hold an alphabet title, but for sheer ruggedness alone he is worthy. In his first defense of the IBF featherweight title, against Thomas, 124¾, Saint-Ouen, France, the momentum swung back and forth, but the 31-year-old Mexican withstood all of the challenger's surges to earn a unanimous decision at the Palais des Sports.

Cruz, 38-11-1 (23), made his big breakthrough last year when he defeated South African Thomas Mashaba in a fight in which he set a CompuBox record for punches thrown—1,580—in a 12-round bout. In October he was just as relentless in beating Orlando Salido to win the IBF belt. His aggressive style presented an intriguing contrast with Thomas' more measured approach behind an efficient jab. Britain's Nicky Cook had dropped Thomas three times before stopping him in nine rounds five years ago, and Thomas was also stopped by Algerian Mohamed Benbiou on cuts in the second round in 2006. But he proved more resilient against Cruz in an exciting encounter, the first alphabet title fight ever to be held in this northern French town.

Thomas, 33-3-4 (10), struggled to hold Cruz off at the outset and his nose began to leak blood from the middle of the opening round. Cruz piled on the pressure in his distinctively crude, swarming way, but Thomas, 32, began to establish his own rhythm in the second round, counterpunching effectively, and at the end of six rounds, two judges had the fight even and the other had Cruz two points ahead.

Sensing that it was close on the scorecards, Cruz came on strong in the seventh and eighth rounds, hurting Thomas with fast, unremitting combinations, and he had another big round in the 10th. Demonstrating great heart, Thomas withstood the bombardment and mounted a strong rally in the 11th and 12th rounds, but it was not enough to take the title.

PHOTO BY FRANCOIS NASCIMBENI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Cruz' relentless attack was a too much for Thomas

Roberto Ramirez (Panama) scored 116-112, and Berit Andreasen (Norway) and Klaus Griesel (Germany) both scored 115-113, all for Cruz. THE RING also scored for Cruz, 116-113.

Promoters: **Golden Gloves, Banner Promotions**
(2-14-09)
Brian Doogan

Anthony Mundine W 12 Shannan Taylor

Wollongong, Australia: Older fighters moving down in weight haven't always proved successful throughout boxing history, but former WBA 168-pound titleholder Mundine, who was rated number four at super middleweight by THE RING before this match, went down eight pounds to middleweight and defeated fellow Aussie veteran Taylor over the distance without any significant difficulties.

The 36-year-old Taylor, 159¾, Wollongong, had promised to give the 33-year-old Mundine, 159½, Sydney, a real physical fight, and while he didn't get the win, he was good to his word. Competing in front of his hometown crowd at the WIN Entertainment Centre, a desperate Taylor was fortunate to only be penalized one point for a low blow in round nine. There were a number of other punches on or below the belt line during the match and what appeared to be some very liberal use of his head as a weapon.

The two experienced professionals showed restraint and respect in the early rounds, feeling each other out at a distance. A head clash in round six infuriated Mundine. Taylor was hurt by a Mundine right hand in round seven. "The Man" hit the canvas in round 10 from an extremely low blow that saw referee Brian McMahon (Australia) only issue a warning to Taylor. Throughout, Mundine's fast hands, work rate, and slick defense proved the difference.

Taylor, 48-7-3 (34), a former welterweight and middleweight title challenger best known for his knockout loss to Shane Mosley in Las Vegas eight years earlier, proved to be a suitable past-his-best, "name" opponent for Mundine to test himself against at 160 pounds.

"Shannan obviously knew that he had to try and do some tactics that were maybe illegal a little bit," said Mundine, "but that's what he has to do to win, to try and upset me and upset my rhythm."

Judge John Cauchi (Australia) scored it 120-108, and judges Mick Heafey (Australia) and Bernie McMahon (Australia) had it 120-107, unanimously for Mundine.

"I tried to win tonight," said Taylor. "He was slick and he was strong."

The most interesting outcome of this match was Mundine's acceptable conditioning at his new weight class, fighting at a consistent if not outright fast pace. Mundine, 35-3 (23), who is now rated the WBA number-one contender at middleweight, will look toward a fight with German WBA titlist Felix Sturm later in 2009.

Promoter: **Tony Mundine**
(2-11-09)
Paul Upham

John Duddy W 10 Matt Vanda

New York, New York: This audition for a possible fight with Kelly Pavlik worked out better than Duddy's last attempt to woo the world middleweight champion into the ring. The last time Duddy appeared at Madison Square Garden, in the hopes of stirring interest in a Pavlik fight, he laid a truncated version of his name—a dud. He just barely got by Walid Smichet in February 2008, receiving a majority decision and a torn-up face for his efforts.

This time, the 29-year-old Duddy, 162, New York, New York, had the perfect foil in Vanda, 162, St. Paul, Minnesota, a stationary target with modest knockout power. In addition, Vanda, 29, had lost five of his last eight bouts entering the contest.

Under new trainer Pat Burns, Duddy, 26-0 (17), came out throwing jabs instead of bombs, and kept Vanda, 39-9 (22), at

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Duddy boxed intelligently against Vanda

a safe, comfortable distance. Duddy protected his easy-to-cut face, but the crowd-pleasing fighter that his fervent Irish supporters were so accustomed to seeing wasn't there.

Vanda, for his part, did little to coax the "old" Duddy out. He ate jab after jab, every once in a while poking his way inside for a powershot. By the sixth round, the bout turned into a monotonous borefest.

The restless fans, there to see the return of Miguel Cotto, stomached it the best they could. Their patience was rewarded, to an extent, in the 10th and final round. Vanda decided to let his hands go, and Duddy opted to revert back to his old ways. Perhaps perked up by the knowledge that he only had three minutes left on the clock, Vanda attacked Duddy with bodyshots and a variety of combinations. After nine rounds in retreat, the Minnesotan was suddenly initiating the action. And Duddy tried to fire back, providing a few moments of excitement in this otherwise forgettable fight. It was the only round Vanda won.

PHOTO BY BRYAN CROWE/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

DeMarco drives a right to Raiymkulov's body

Judges Julie Lederman (USA) and Robin Taylor (USA) both had it 99-91 for Duddy, as did THE RING, while John Signorelli (USA) somehow saw it 97-93 for Duddy. Referee Arthur Mercante Jr. (USA) had a relatively easy night, breaking the few clinches.

Both fighters left the ring unscathed, which for Duddy was a welcome improvement over the Smichet fight. But apparently he still didn't find the right approach to earn him a title shot, as Pavlik instead selected Sergio Mora as his next title challenger.

Television: **Top Rank Pay-Per-View**
Promoter: **Top Rank**
(2-21-09)
Joseph Santoliquito

Antonio DeMarco KO 9
Almazbek Raiymkulov

Anaheim, California: This was the biggest test yet for southpaw prospect DeMarco, 23, and he passed with a "B-" grade, showing himself able to absorb big shots and shrug off a cut he suffered in the first round. He doesn't get an "A" because he started slowly, giving early rounds to the heavy-handed Raiymkulov, 27-2-1 (15), who's better known by his nickname, "Kid Diamond."

DeMarco, 21-1-1 (15), cut in the corner of his right eye from an accidental clash of heads, ratcheted up his game as he went along, eventually coming on with blistering combinations that roused the crowd of 5,450 in the Honda Center. The co-feature gave Mexican and Mexican-American fans something to cheer about before Vic Darchinyan rolled over popular Jorge Arce in the main event.

DeMarco now holds the regional NABO belt in a lightweight division bristling with tough hombres, including champion Juan Manuel Marquez, Joel Casamayor, and not one, not two, but three dangerous Diazes in the top 10 (Juan, David, and Julio).

DeMarco, 134, Tijuana, Mexico, kept his hands low but moved his head. The Kid from Kyrgyzstan ruled the inside and tried to rough up the less experienced DeMarco, but as the battle wore on, it was waged more and more at DeMarco's distance. Finally, in round nine, Kid Diamond, 133½, stumbled back to the ropes, hurt and no longer able to keep DeMarco off of him. He barely finished the round and his corner surrendered.

Publicist Lee Samuels of Top Rank, the loser's promoter, pronounced DeMarco a "good prospect." But he said Kid Diamond had been ravaged by the flu. Raiymkulov later said he had nothing left after six rounds. Raiymkulov's only losses have been to DeMarco and Nate Campbell, but he's 32 and not getting any faster. At this point he appears on his way to becoming a steppingstone.

DeMarco? Too early to tell, but he's been brought along well, and a year or two down the road he could prove worrisome to top-ranked fighters.

Television: **Showtime**
Promoters: **Top Rank, Gary Shaw**
(2-7-09)
Ivan Goldman ■

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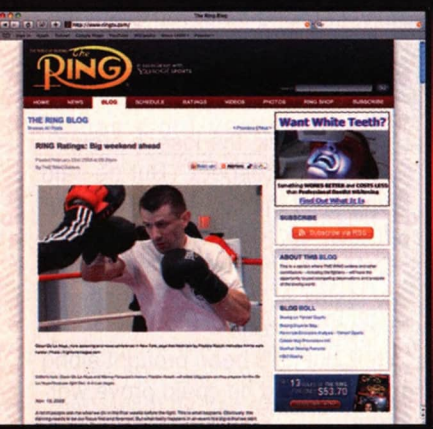

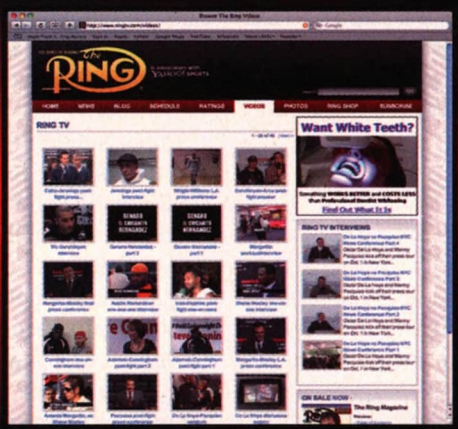

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 (Continued from Page 26)

other words to come out ... and when she paused, I asked her 'Is he dead?' But she didn't tell me that. It caused me to flash back to a sermon I heard preached before I went away, and that's the spiritual enemy of all men does not just destroy them, but also their offspring. I saw the cycle get ready to attack my children. I was going to break that cycle. I prayed to God and He heard my cries. I had to grab my children and change their environment."

Devonte was two years old when he accidentally shot himself in the stomach, playing with a gun that belonged to his mother's boyfriend. It was Hylon Jr. who found him lying down, blood seeping out of his side. For Hylon Sr., it was a frightening repeat of what he had endured. He, too, was shot in the abdomen, when he was 21, an incident that collapsed any hopes he had of making the 1988 United States Olympic team.

Williams smacks Jessie Ortiz with a right en route to a four-round decision in September 2008. Williams may not have a lot of pop in his punches, but he has excellent hand speed and is a very accurate puncher.

So, in an effort to save his sons, Hylon Sr. turned to the discipline of boxing. But each time he tried to get Hylon Jr. and Devonte involved, it was a tug-of-war. They were both young when they moved in with their father, who had since separated from their mother.

Hylon Jr. would go to school, hit the gym, go home, have dinner, finish homework, and then go to bed. The next day in school, he would hear all the juicy gossip and tidbits about what had happened the night before in South Park.

"We'd complain to my mother about boxing and she'd complain to my father about boxing," said Williams. "I didn't have any playtime, and I thought that's what life was all about. I was a kid. I wanted to play, run around, play basketball. Kids in school would tell me 'your daddy's mean,' but my father would always say those kids didn't have fathers and that's why they were allowed to run the streets. He said that it eventually would catch up to them. Actually, a lot of those kids took the street route. My father said that all they were doing was basically hustling to pay for lawyers. I didn't know any better."

But Hylon Jr. stuck with boxing and eventually something happened: He started winning. By the time he was 14, he was on the U.S. Junior Olympic team at 119 pounds and reached the 125-pound finals at the 2008 U.S. Olympic Trials. After compiling an amateur record of 145-20, he signed with Golden Boy Promotions and turned pro in April 2008.

In his most recent outing, Williams looked very impressive, showing fast, accurate hands in a sixth-round stoppage of previously undefeated Edgar Portillo on the Juan Manuel Marquez-Juan Diaz undercard in Houston. Hylon may not have one-punch power, but his punches hurt enough for the lumped-up Portillo to quit on his stool after the fifth.

"My father was right," Williams admitted. "It took some time, because there were moments when I would come to the gym and I didn't want to train and I gave my father a hard time. I wasn't the easiest kid to deal with then. If I let up a little, he got on me, or he would give me that I'm-going-to-beat-your-ass stare if I got into any kind of trouble."

To see Hylon Sr. today, you would never suspect he did prison time. He's a changed man from the one who went away 16 years ago. His victory has come in the success of his son. Call it living vicariously through Hylon Jr., call it anything you want, the most important thing for the father is that the cycle has been shattered.

"Hylon realizes that he could make something out of boxing," his father said. "He feels appreciated. It wasn't my intention that Hylon be a boxing star. My main goal was to keep him busy so he wouldn't have time to get in trouble. Sure, there were times when I could have given up and he could have given up. We didn't."

Things also turned out well for little brother Devonte. Although he still carries a bullet in his back, he's currently a three-sport star at Houston's Sterling High School. ■

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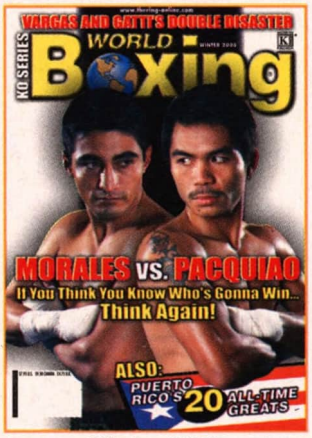

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Fall 1999: Danger Ahead! Is Oscar's Macho Madness Dangerous To His Health? Plus: Ali vs. today's top 10, kayo victims, heavyweight report card.

Winter 1999: Why De La Hoya Deserved The Decision Over Trinidad. Plus: Johnny Tapia, Mark Johnson, heavyweight report card, seniors.

Spring 2000: Now We Know Grant's A *Fighter!* (We Just Don't Know How Good A Fighter). Plus: Fernando Vargas, Muhammad Ali, crying game.

Summer 2000: Mosley vs. De La Hoya: Why It's Happening ... Who Will Win! Plus: Paul Spadafora, Oba Carr, suffering survivors.

Fall 2000: 10 Reasons Mike Tyson Can Beat Lennox Lewis. Plus: Arturo Gatti, Felix Trinidad, Mike Griffith.

[All-color beginning with the March 2001 issue]

March 2001: The Ultimate Boxing Ratings. Plus: Tyson-Golota, Marco Antonio Barrera, Joel Cassamayor.

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Feb. 2003: Can Anyone Wipe The Smile Off Oscar's Face? Plus: Lennox Lewis, Eric Lucas, Jesse James Leija, Shane Mosley, 10 all-time most exciting fighters.

June 2003: Lennox's Legacy On The Line: Will He Be Toppled In '03? Plus: Fernando Vargas, Arturo Gatti, 2002 in review.

Oct. 2003: Hall Call: Today's Best Fighters—Who's Headed To Canastota? Plus: Hasim Rahman, Mayweather-De La Hoya, Miguel Barrera, Winky Wright, Roy Jones, heavyweight flops.

May 2004: Vitali Klitschko: Another Step Toward "World Domination." Plus: Shane Mosley, junior middle report card, when losers win, 2003 in review.

Sept. 2004: Hopkins vs. De La Hoya: What Is Oscar Thinking? Plus: Wright-Mosley, Corrales-Casamayor, Glen Johnson, Felix Sturm, Lennox Lewis, 2004 Hall of Fame, lightweight report card.

Dec. 2004: What's Next? Has Mike Tyson Run Out Of Options? Plus: Gatti & Leija, Kermit Cintron, Floyd Mayweather, British boxing slump, ultimate ratings, featherweight report card.

April 2005: Tszyu Erases Mitchell ... And All Doubts. Plus: Roy Jones, Judah-Spinks preview, Travis Simms, Carl Thompson, Bernard Hopkins, old age.

Dec. 2005: Corrales vs. Castillo: Can The Rematch Measure Up To The Original? Plus: Floyd Mayweather, Taylor-Hopkins, Kevin McBride, Zab Judah, great rematch fighters, middleweight report card.

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The Ring Flashback

Through the years with "The Bible of Boxing"

April 1949

COVER STORY: "Dream Fight: Louis-Dempsey" by Daniel M. Daniel takes a novel approach to the age-old dream fight scenario by juxtaposing two of both fighters' most memorable victories. "It is essential, and interesting, to analyze the punch-by-punch drama of the contest in which [Jack] Dempsey took the title from [Jess] Willard, and the encounter that made [Joe] Louis the champion," wrote Daniel. "Suppose, in these detailed stories, you substitute 'Louis' for Willard and 'Dempsey' for Braddock. Not a reliable line, but try it, just for fun."

This weird exercise was repeated in the Dempsey-Luis Angel Firpo and the second Louis-Max Schmeling fight, after which Daniel invited readers to make up their own minds as to who would have won a contest between "The Manassa Mauler" and "The Brown Bomber."

Daniel did not say whom he thought would win, but he did write, "If I'm giving the impression that I am picking Dempsey in his prime over Louis in a title fight, with each man in the greatest form of his career, I am sorry. I don't want to stick my neck out that far."

Louis was still the reigning heavyweight champion when the article was written, but was clearly considered in decline, and was described by Daniel as "fading out of the picture, a mere imitation of his old self."

World Champions

(for the period ended February 15, 1949)

Heavyweight: Joe Louis
Light Heavyweight: Freddie Mills
Middleweight: Marcel Cerdan
Welterweight: Ray Robinson
Lightweight: Ike Williams
Featherweight: Willie Pep
Bantamweight: Manuel Ortiz
Flyweight: Rinty Monaghan

"Boxing Still Leads In International Sports" by Hanley Thompson highlights the global nature of the Sweet Science, which had recently been emphasized by the ascension of two European fighters at the expense of boxers from the United States.

"Within the last year, two champions vanished from our shores. The light heavyweight diadem wound up on the British head of Freddie Mills, and the middleweight laurels became the property of French-Moroccan [sic] Marcel Cerdan," bemoaned Thompson. "The latest invasion of European glovers would indicate that serious efforts are being made to wrest a few of the remaining titles from us."

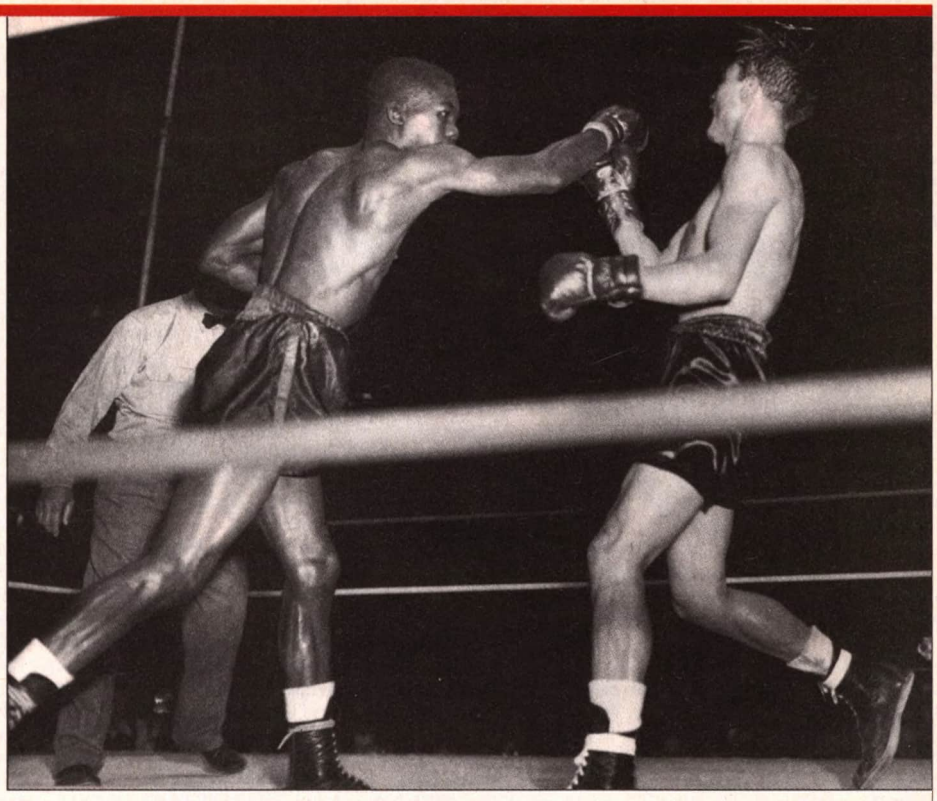
Light heavyweight champion Mills wearing his Ring belt

At the time, non-Americans held titles in three of the then-recognized eight divisions, with flyweight champion Rinty Monaghan of Ireland joining Mills and Cerdan. But among the invaders Thompson men-

tioned as threats—Italians Beppe Colasanti and Silvano Locatelli, Dutchmen Luc Van Dam, Tunisian Gaetano Annaloro, and Frenchmen Laurent Dauthuille and Jean Walzack—not a single one of them ever became a world champion.

"Nat Fleischer Says" extols the virtues of making the fights fans want to see, noting that crowds of 19,097 and 15,125 showed up at Madison Square Garden to the see the Willie Pep-Sandy Saddler and Kid Gavilan-Ike Williams bouts, respectively.

Fleischer also wrote about Gavilan's controversial decision over Williams: "Though there was very little to choose between the combatants, so close was the score, I agree with Williams that the huge turnout of Cubans among other Latin-Americans who rooted every time Gavilan made a swing whether it landed or not had considerable bearing on the decision and the attitude of the big gathering ... Yet I found no fault with the verdict, so close was the battle."



Williams en route to beating Bolanos via split decision

"Broadcast From New York" by Jersey Jones gives a rather contradictory account of reigning lightweight champion Ike Williams.

"The dour-faced Trentonian seems surly, nasty, antagonistic," wrote Jones. "He seldom smiles, and when he talks he appears lacking in even the basic fundamentals of tact and diplomacy. Generally, Williams leaves a sour taste in the mouths of those meeting him for the first time."

Then Jones went on to detail the charitable work Williams had done, which included donating 30 percent of his purse from a defense against Enrique Bolanos to the Lou Costello Youth Foundation, and ended up calling Williams "a real champion—out of the ring as well as in."

Of course, the fact that Williams was controlled by organized crime figures who skimmed tens of thousands of dollars off the top of his purses probably had something to do with the champ's grumpy disposition. This sorry situation also cast a shadow over the alleged "donations."

Louis drops Verne Mitchell in exhibition bout

"In Sunny California" local correspondent Harry Winkler predicts great things for middleweight J.T. Ross: "As we say in Hollywood, 'A start was born' at the Hollywood Stadium on the night J.T. Ross punched out a kayo win over Don Lee in eight rounds. To defeat Lee is quite a stunt in itself, but it was the decisive manner in which he did it that made Ross the talk of local fistic circles."

Alas, Ross never quite lived up to Winkler's hype. He did fine on the club circuit, but lost whenever he stepped up to world-class opposition. His career ended the following year when Gene Hairston knocked him out at Madison Square Garden.

"Under Southern Skies" by Tom Ephrem shines the spotlight on heavyweight champion Louis' lucrative exhibition tour: "Louis, in his Florida appearances, totaling 77 minutes, received $32,798 (Miami $11,300; West Palm Beach $3,500; Tampa $4,900; Orlando $3,500; Jacksonville $6,089; Daytona Beach $3,500)." ■

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Vol. III, 2005: Cover Story: Glen Johnson—Fighter of the Year. **Bonus Issue:** The Year In Pictures. **Also Inside:** Year-end awards, Vitali Klitschko, Jermain Taylor & Jeff Lacy.

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Vol. V, 2005: Cover Story: "Pretty Boy" Floyd: Just As Great As He Says He Is … Maybe Even Better. **Bonus Section:** The Pound-For-Pound Elite. **Also Inside:** Tarver-Jones II, Mike Tyson, quitters.

Vol. VI, 2005: Cover Story: Hopkins vs. Taylor II: 10 Crucial Questions Surrounding The Middleweight Championship. **Magazine Within A Magazine:** Tribute To Rocky Marciano. **Also Inside:** Raheem-Morales, Judah & Mayweather, Brian Viloria, *Box Like The Pros* book excerpt.

March 2006: Cover Story: Exclusive *Ring* Interview: Marco Antonio Barrera. **Bonus Section:** The 10 Fights We'd Like To See. **Also Inside:** Vitali Klitschko, *The Contender,* Roy Jones, Pongsaklek Wonjongkam, Nigel Benn.

May 2006: Cover Story: Forget Judah! It's Time To Bring Hatton And Mayweather Together! **Magazine Within A Magazine:** The Year In Pictures. **Also Inside:** Nicolay Valuev, Ray Mancini, top 10 trainers.

July 2006: Cover Story: Taylor vs. Wright: The Experts Pick The Winner. **Bonus Section:** The State of the Game. **Also Inside:** Joe Calzaghe, Mosley-Vargas, Emanuel Augustus, Tony DeMarco, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Sept. 2006: Gold Standard! Oscar's Brilliant Performance A Matchmaker's Dream. **Bonus Section:** *The Contender,* Season 2. **Also Inside:** Ricky Hatton, Wladimir Klitschko, Lou DiBella, Floyd Patterson.

Nov. 2006: The Sweet Life: Sugar Shane Is Back On Top. **Magazine Within A Magazine:** The 25th Anniversary Of Leonard-Hearns. **Also Inside:** Wladimir Klitschko, Baldomir-Gatti, Taylor-Wright, Manny Pacquiao, Jose Luis Castillo, Chris Eubank.

Jan. 2007: *The Contender:* Changing Boxing … Reviving Careers. Bonus Section: The Ring 100. **Also Inside:** Barrera-Juarez II, W. Klitschko-Brock preview, Edwin Valero, Clinton Woods, Mustafa Hamsho, psychological warfare.

March 2007: Best In The World? Pac-Man's Closing In On Pretty Boy. **Bonus Section:** The Ring's Fights of the Year: 1945-2005. **Also Inside:** Mayweather-Baldomir, Wladimir Klitschko, Peter Manfredo Jr., The Ring Interview: Bernard Hopkins.

May 2007: Samuel Peter: Is The Nigerian Nightmare The Heavyweight Of Our Dreams? **Magazine Within A Magazine:** The Year In Pictures. **Also Inside:** Ricky Hatton, De La Hoya-Mayweather preview, fitness gurus.

July 2007: Can Zab Judah Help Us Solve The Mystery Of Miguel Cotto? **Bonus Section:** The State of the Game. **Also Inside:** J.M. Marquez-Barrera, Rafael Marquez, Manny Pacquiao, Morrison & Mesi comebacks, Joe Louis, boxing's wild men, Canada.

Sept. 2007: All-Star Report Cards: **Also Inside:** Kelly Pavlik, Roy Jones, Floyd Mayweather, Diaz-Freitas, Gatti & Ward, Bite Fite, George Chuvalo, Pac-Man vs. all-time greats.

Nov. 2007: Pacquiao-Barrera II: Revenge Is The Great Motivator. **Bonus Section:** The Greatest Fight I Ever Saw. **Also Inside:** Hatton-Mayweather, Hopkins-Wright, Donaire-Darchinyan, Julio Cesar Chavez Jr., Arturo Gatti, Paulie Malignaggi, Dawson-Tarver, Sonny Liston.

Dec. 2007: Calzaghe-Kessler, Hatton-Mayweather—Britain Puts Its Best Fists Forward. **Also Inside:** Erik Morales, Vazquez-Marquez, Nick Katsidis, Joey Gamache, *The Contender,* welterweights, hometown fighters.

Jan. 2008: Dancing With Disaster: Pretty Boy Won't Be Doing The Tango With Hatton. Also Inside: Jones-Trinidad preview, Alfonso Gomez, Israel Vasquez, U.K. vs. U.S.

Feb. 2008: A Superstar Is Born: Pavlik Revs Up The Engine That Drives The Sport. Also Inside: Pacquiao-Barrera II, Holyfield-Ibragimov, Andre Berto, Junior Witter, postponements. **Bonus Section:** 20 Greatest Welterweights.

March 2008: Cotto Crashes The Elite: "I'll Fight Any Big Name." Also Inside: Calzaghe-Kessler, Bika-Codrington, Mayorga-Vargas, Manny Pacquiao, Bobby Scanlon, Joe Calzaghe book excerpt, lightweights, 10 burning questions for 2008.

April 2008: Floyd Mayweather: Fighter Of The Year. **Also Inside:** 2007 In Review, Marquez-Pacquiao II preview, Regina Halmich, "Boxcasting."

May 2008: Marquez vs. Pacquiao: The Experts Pick The Winner Of The Long-Awaited Rematch. **Also Inside:** Roy Jones, Paul Malignaggi, Floyd Mayweather, Joe DeNucci, 2007 in pictures.

June 2008: Exit Strategy: Is Oscar Ready For His Biggest Challenge Ever? **Also Inside:** Calzaghe-Hopkins preview, Larry Holmes, Steve Cunningham, Pavlik-Taylor II, Paul Williams, Jack "The Nonpareil" Dempsey.

July 2008: The State Of The Game: Our Exclusive Annual Report. **Also Inside:** Vazquez-Marquez III, Pacquiao-Marquez II, heavyweight slump, Ricky Hatton, Robert Guerrero, Billy Petrolle.

Aug. 2008: Double Champ Joe Calzaghe: If He Wants To Defend Both Belts … Let Him! **Also Inside:** Cotto-Margarito preview, Tarver-Woods & Dawson-Johnson, Casamayor-Campbell, Kevin Rooney, The Ring visits Cuba & Pacquiao in Philippines.

Sept. 2008: Antonio Margarito: Is He The Man To Cut Down Cotto? **Also Inside:** De La Hoya-Forbes, Amir Khan, best & worst managed fighters, "long-timers," *American Son* excerpt.

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Feb. 2009: A Look Ahead To 2009. **Also Inside:** Hatton-Malignaggi, Calzaghe-Jones, Haye-Barrett, Darchinyan-Mijares, Juan Manuel Marquez, super middleweights.

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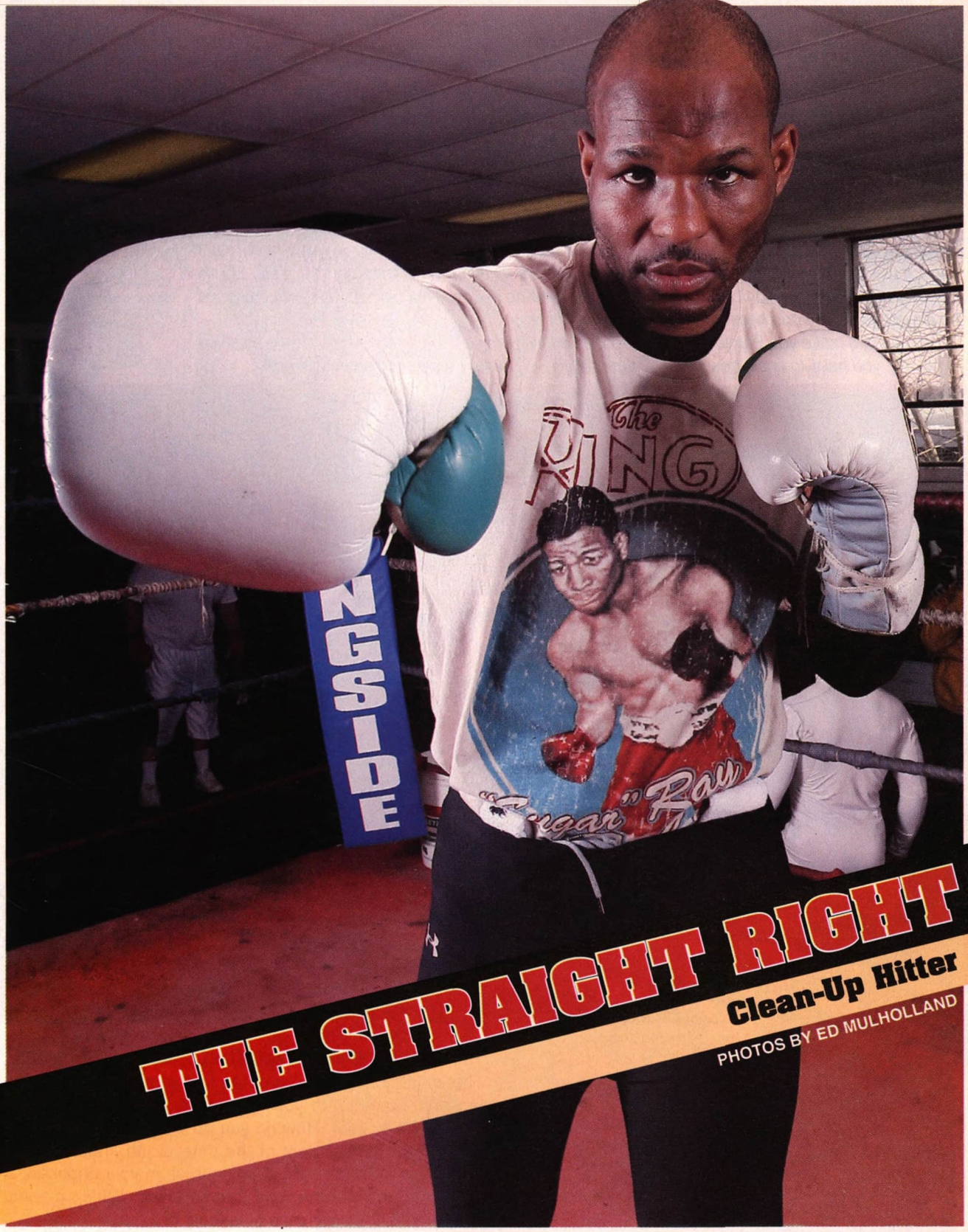
Boxing Lessons From A Living Legend

By Bernard Hopkins



THE STRAIGHT RIGHT

Clean-Up Hitter

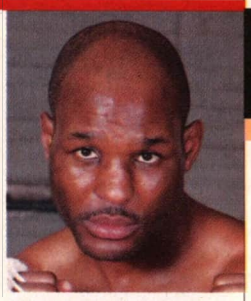
PHOTOS BY ED MULHOLLAND

Everything you do in boxing is about setting something up. You move to set up position. You jab to set up other punches. You roll to set up the left hook. You slide over to set up the jab. You take a half step back to set up the counter. Everything you do is setting the table. And what are you setting him up for? What's the payoff? The straight right. It's the clean-up hit. It clears everyone off the bases so you can start setting everything up again.

Like everything else in this game, landing the right hand is all about timing, technique, and especially position. Know how they say in real estate everything is location, location, location? In boxing everything is position, position, position, especially when it comes to landing the right hand and making it count. You learn to do it right and develop a great right hand, you can go a long way.

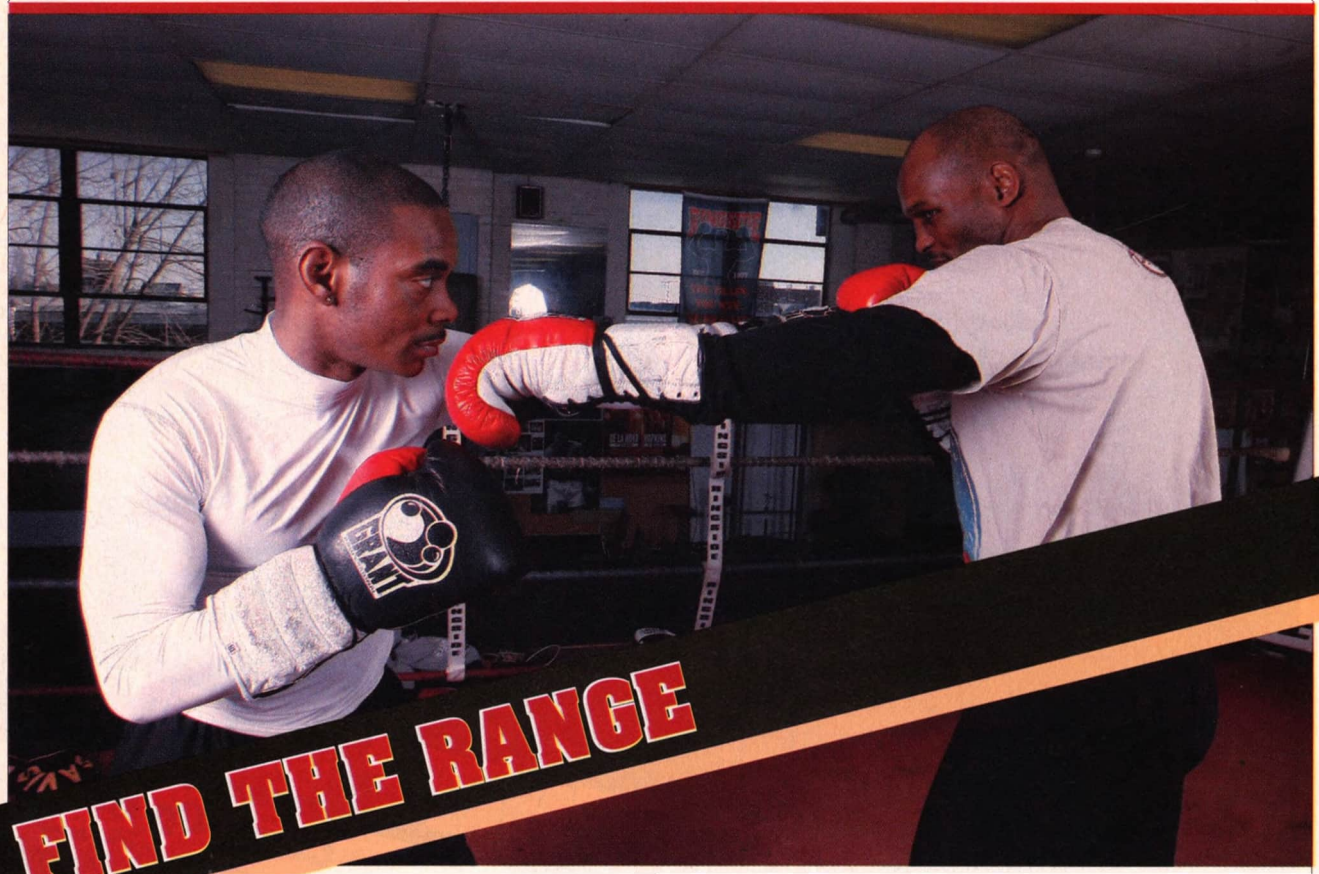
Some of the greatest fighters ever had great right hands. Muhammad Ali, Joe Louis, Jack Dempsey, Sugar Ray Robinson, Larry Holmes. All those guys could hurt you with a straight right hand. If you hit hard enough with it, it almost doesn't matter if you don't do anything else great. Earnie Shavers couldn't jab, couldn't hook, had no defense, and no stamina, but his right hand was so good he almost won the world heavyweight title a couple of times.

No one can make you Earnie Shavers if you don't have it in you, but if you're going to do anything in boxing, you have to know how to throw the right. Here Danny Davis and I show you how.



BERNARD HOPKINS
Is the former middleweight and light heavyweight champion of the world.

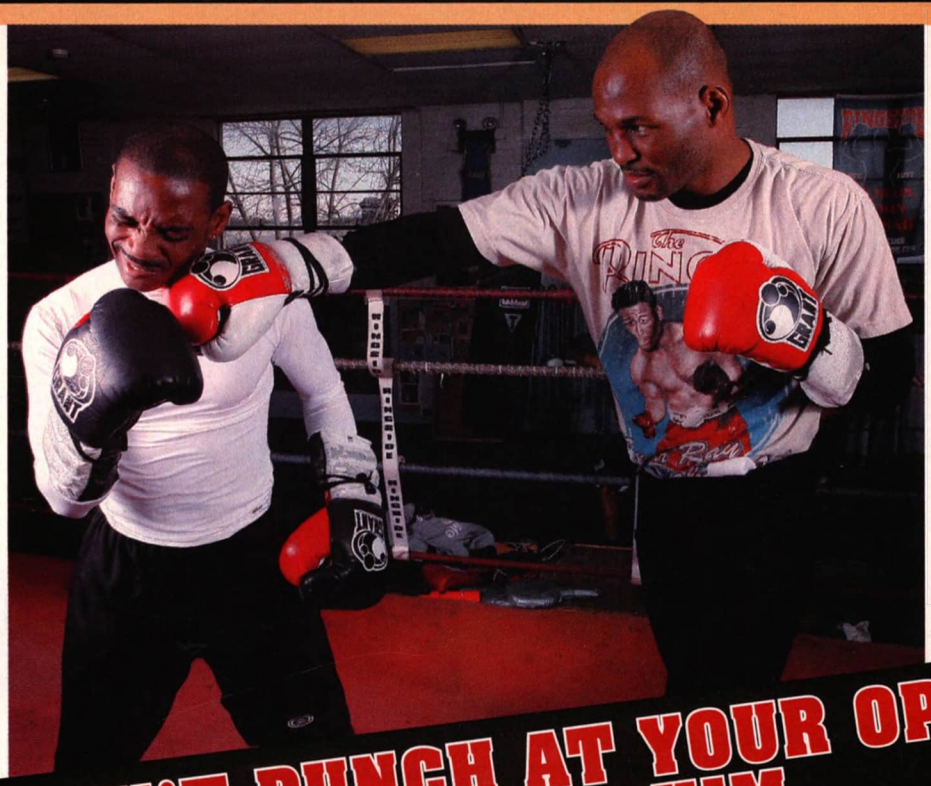
(All photos taken at Andy Carr's Gym in Upper Darby, PA)



FIND THE RANGE

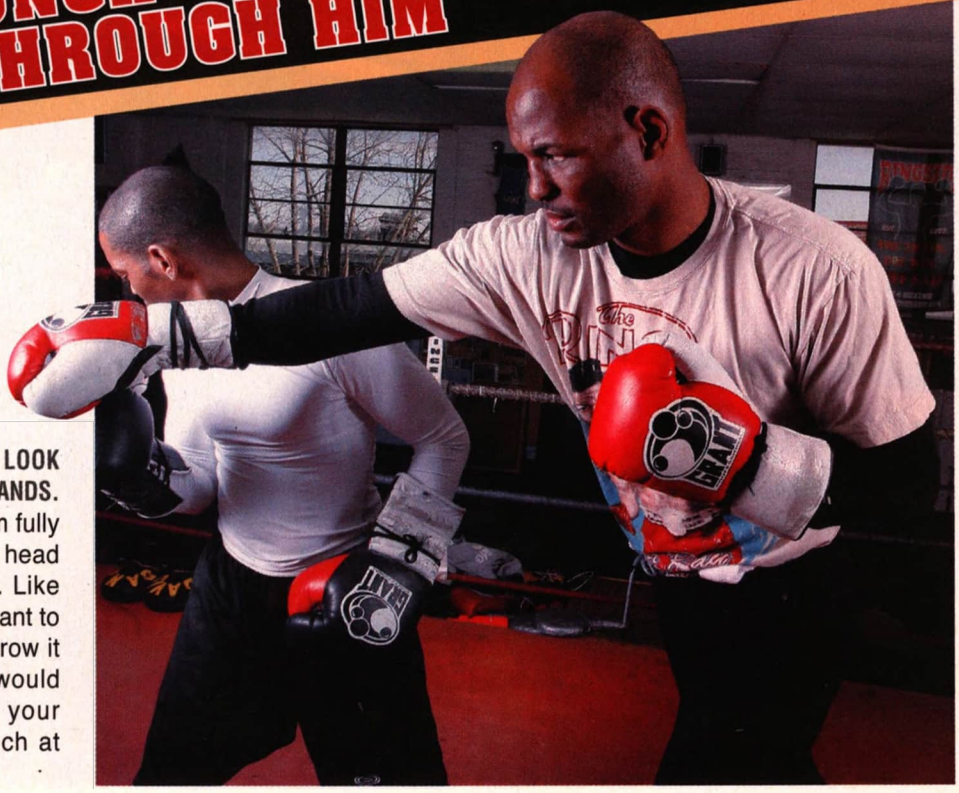
YOU CAN'T JUST RUN OUT AND START SLINGING RIGHT HANDS. That's not boxing. You've got to find your range, see how close you can get to your opponent, and how close you have to be to land. How do you do that? With the jab, of course. And 99 percent of the time, a jab should come before your straight right. With your jab in your opponent's face, he can't see the right hand coming. Which means you've got a better chance of landing it.

STRAIGHT AND TRUE



THE STRAIGHT RIGHT MUST BE TRUE TO ITS NAME: It goes straight out from the shoulder, straight as an arrow. Your weight shifts mostly to your front (left) leg, and your hips rotate around to give it power and you drive it with your legs. Like any other punch, the power comes from the bottom up, and when the punch lands, your palm should be facing the floor.

DON'T PUNCH AT YOUR OPPONENT; PUNCH THROUGH HIM

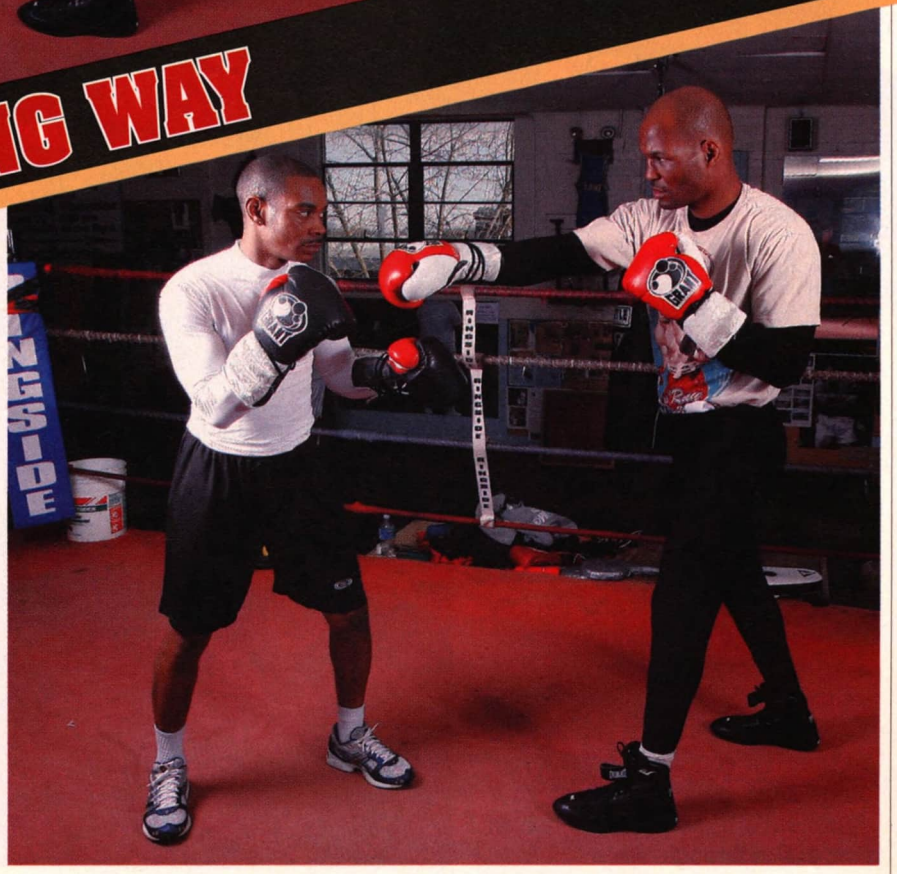


HERE'S WHAT YOU WANT IT TO LOOK LIKE AFTER YOUR RIGHT HAND LANDS. Notice I follow through until I'm fully extended and my opponent's head is turned completely around. Like with any straight punch, you want to be close enough when you throw it so that if it could, your fist would come through the back of your opponent's head. Don't punch at him; punch through him.

DRIVE IT WITH YOUR LEGS

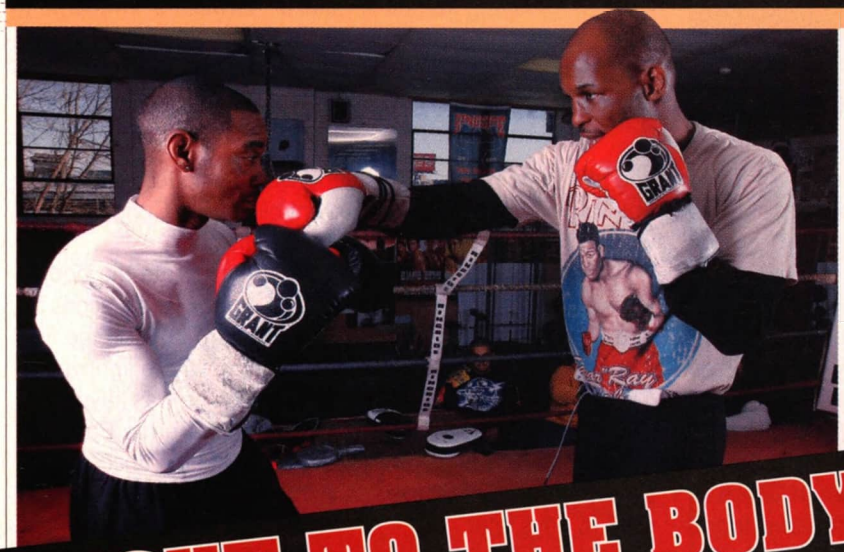
NOTICE WHAT MY LEGS AND FEET ARE DOING: My left foot is in front, with most of my weight there. The right foot is behind and the heel is raised slightly off the floor so I'm on the ball of my foot. My hips are rotating. That's what generates the power.

THE WRONG WAY



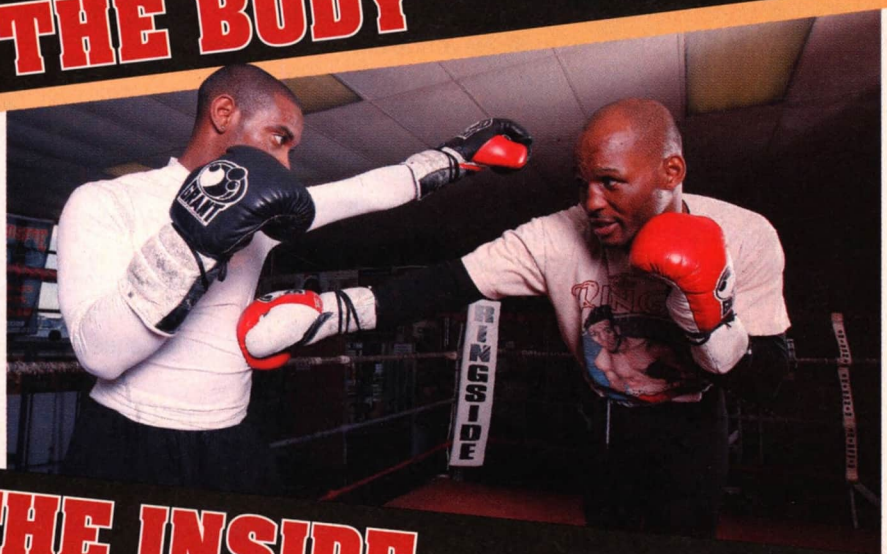
WRONG, WRONG, WRONG. First, I'm too far away to land. That means I'm not in position, and if my opponent is quick, he can counter me. Second, look at my body; I'm squared up. My left foot should be in front of my right. Third, I'm completely flat-footed and not driving with my legs or hips. And fourth, my chin isn't tucked down against my chest. Terrible execution.

BEST AGAINST SHORTER GUYS



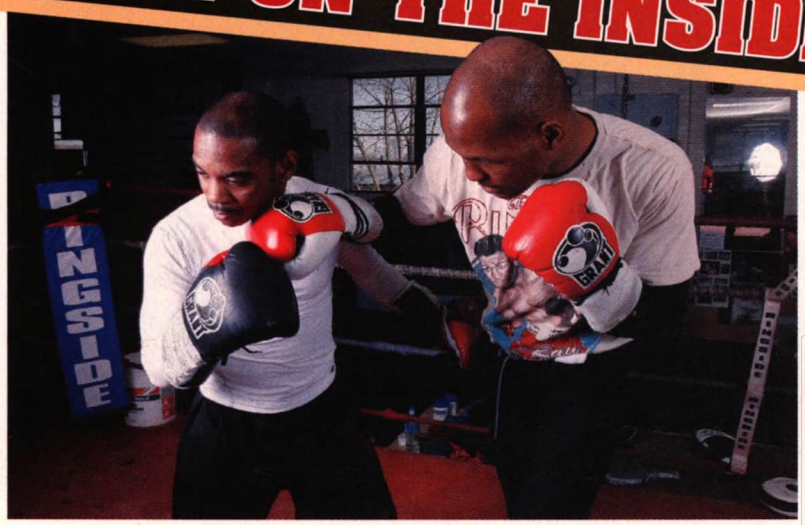
THE STRAIGHT RIGHT IS BEST USED AGAINST GUYS SHORTER THAN YOU ARE. It doesn't work as well against taller guys, who are more open for the overhand right. If you've got a shorter guy in front of you who comes right in, the basic left jab-straight right should work all night.

RIGHT TO THE BODY



THE STRAIGHT RIGHT ISN'T JUST A HEADSHOT. It's not easy, but you can drive it to the body, too, especially as a counterpunch. It's easier with a taller guy, but if you can time your opponent's jab and get under it with a right to the body, it's a good move.

EVEN ON THE INSIDE



THE SHORT, STRAIGHT RIGHT ON THE INSIDE works just as well as the straight right from the outside. Notice my positioning here: I'm inside his left; he can't do anything from where he is but eat my right hand. He's got no choice. That's what positioning does for you.

By Margaret Goodman, M.D.

A New Look At An Old Problem

On September 14, 1999, super middleweight Randie Carver died of head injuries suffered in a bout with Kabray Salem two days earlier at Harrah's Casino in Kansas City, Missouri. The fight, televised live on Fox Sports, followed Carver's physical decline while commentator Sean O'Grady begged for the fight to be stopped. Moreover, Kabray's repeated headbutts went ignored by referee Ross Strada. The fight was called in the 10th as the 24-year-old local favorite collapsed. He never regained consciousness.

Tim Lueckenhoff, president of the Association of Boxing Commissions and administrator of the Missouri Office of Athletics, conducted an internal investigation and found none of the officials to be at fault. Nevertheless, multiple lawsuits were filed, including against the ring physician, who eventually quit his practice and became a maitre d'.

The Professional Boxing Safety Act passed in 1996 mandated that an ambulance or medical personnel with appropriate resuscitation equipment be continuously present on-site for every fight. But Missouri found a way around that seemingly important detail. In fact, it took more than 15 minutes for an ambulance to arrive at the scene to transport Carver.

Furthermore, an ambulance was not on site a few months earlier when Fernando Ibarra (Maldonado) collapsed after a fight in St. Louis. Although Ibarra did not die, he suffered significant brain damage and was eventually awarded $13.7-million in compensatory damages.

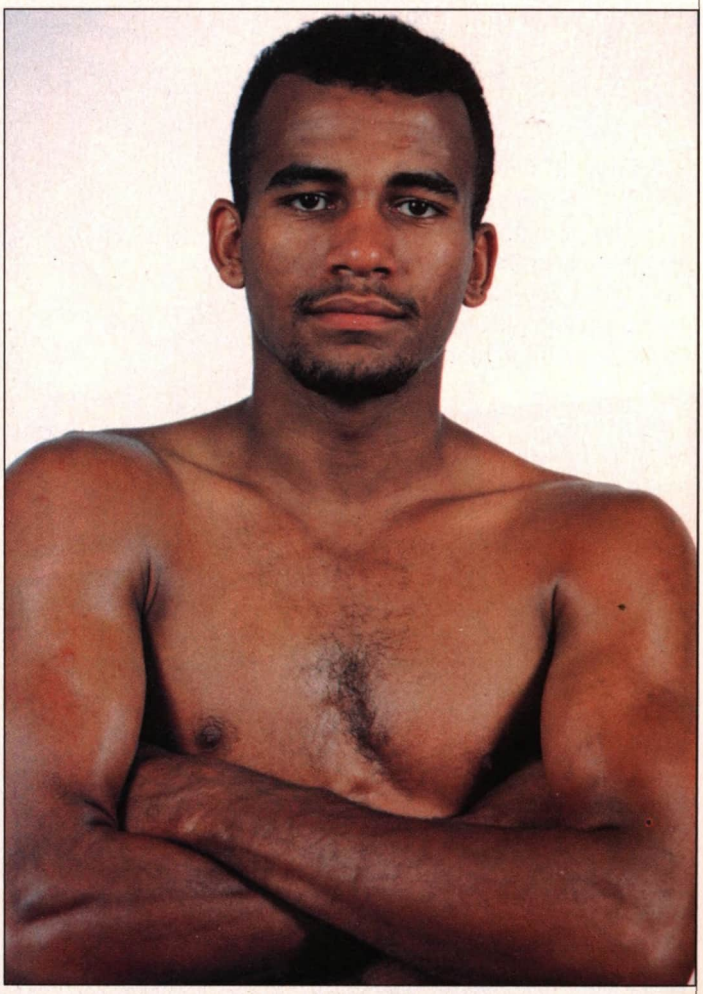
Still, some good can occasionally come from something bad.

One observer at the Salem-Carver fight was Robert G. Rodriguez, a lover of the sport and part-time boxing writer. Rodriguez believed this horrifying incident brought to light the disparity in safety regulations from state to state.

In 2002, while pursuing his doctoral degree at the University of Kansas, Rodriguez had an informal discussion with a professor regarding why Mike Tyson was having difficulty finding a state that would license him to fight after his altercation with Lennox Lewis at a New York press conference, which, along with the Carver tragedy, inspired Rodriguez' book, *The Regulation Of Boxing*.

The book represents the first time anyone has conducted a detailed review and assessment of the evolution of boxing regulations, along with a discussion of present-day legislation and the current bill before Congress that would create a national boxing commission.

Veteran boxing writer George Kimball wrote the book's foreward, where he described various egregious situations he had witnessed, including a 1980 undercard bout on the first Roberto Duran-Sugar Ray Leonard card, where lightweight Cleveland Denny became comatose when he was kayoed by Gaetan Hart. Showtime commentator Dr. Ferdie Pacheco abandoned his on-the-air duties to attend to the unconscious Denny when no other medical services were present. Denny died 16 days later.



Would an ambulance at the fight site have saved Randie Carver?

Kimball notes, "In the pages of this book Rodriguez documents the bizarre discrepancies at play in regulating boxing in a nation that stages thousands of professional matches each year ... In some instances the recognized commission might be a non-government agency thrown together by the promoters themselves—a case of the fox guarding the henhouse. And in far too many cases, governmentally appointed state boxing commissions are a dumping ground for patronage appointments, staffed by inept political hacks with little background in the sport."

Rodriguez adopts a multi-pronged approach in his examination. In addition to a historical analysis, he interviewed commission executive directors and officials, performed a statistical analysis of 46 commission surveys, conducted a case analysis in Nevada where he attended a 2005 fight, observed my participation as a ring physician, and interviewed state officials. Rodriguez also interviewed Aaron Davis while he was still a commissioner in the newly formed Kansas commission (before he left for New Jersey to replace Larry Hazzard), and performed an in-depth look at boxing regulations in Argentina.

The book also tackles drug testing. Only 65 percent of state commissions responding to his questionnaire conducted drug testing, excluding championship bouts where it is mandated by sanctioning organizations. New Jersey remains the only jurisdiction testing *all* fighters.

Since the survey, however, jurisdictions such as California have incorporated extensive testing that includes anabolic steroids and masking agents (substances that conceal steroid presence).

Beyond drug testing, HIV screens, neurological evaluations, boxing-related deaths, state wealth, gambling, and political culture were other distinctive differences separating state commissions from each other.

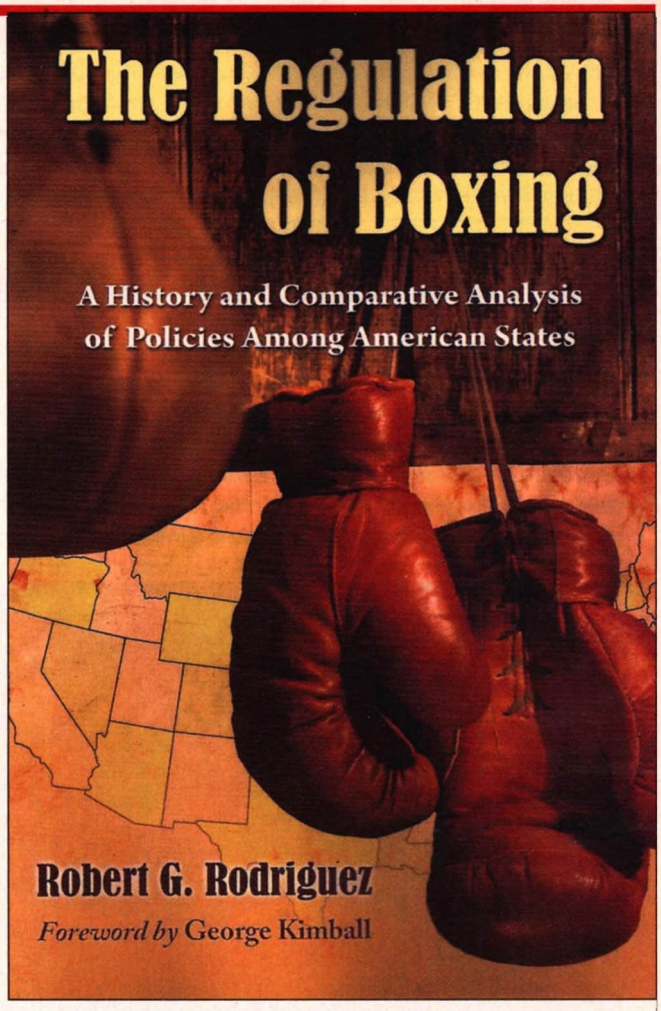
The diversity in political culture reflects the values people share with respect to government and can have a significant impact on the way the state regulates boxing. These differences can be divided into three categories: a government that doesn't inhibit material interests (individualist), a government that provides for the collective good (moralist), and a government that preserves social and economic hierarchies (traditionalist).

Wealthier states with higher median income were more likely to conduct drug testing, while moralist states require HIV testing. And states with greater numbers of boxing-related deaths and greater median income conduct more medical testing.

The only limitation of the book centers on when the data was collected. The boxing death tallies extending from 1843 to 2004 are misleading for jurisdictions such California and Ohio that have recently advanced their requirements.

On the other hand, the book contains a fascinating compendium of information such as the genesis of Nevada boxing in 1897 and how it rose to become the boxing capital.

Argentina is a fascinating jurisdiction to compare to the United States, as it has a national federation that oversees the sport. Unfortunately, it allows a television network to be the primary funding source for the commission!



Can new book jumpstart health and safety reform?

Senator John McCain once said, "Professional boxing is the only major sport in the United States that does not have a strong, centralized association or league to establish and enforce uniform rules and practices."

After extensive research, the book's author is in agreement with McCain: "The federal government has an opportunity to enhance a policy area that states are reluctant to improve, as this study indicates," said Rodriguez. "If the states through their respective boxing commissions are unwilling to improve health and safety standards for professional boxing, then federal involvement is long overdue."

Rodriguez' book is a must-read for commission members and officials as well as those fascinated by the sport's regulatory evolution and how fights are handled on a commission level. For those who care about the sport's future—including fighter safety and health—I believe it could serve as a jumping off point to advance standards.

***

The Regulation Of Boxing (McFarland, 135 pages, paperback, $31.50) is available at barnesandnoble.com. ■

By Jim Bagg

Ja-Makin' A Case For The Hall

Eventually, all fighters get old in body, and when they do, it's usually partially because they've gotten old in spirit. Why is Bernard Hopkins so amazingly effective at age 44? No doubt, to a degree, it's because he's taken such good care of himself over the years. But the greater factor may well be the fact that he's never lost his hunger, that he's found ways to motivate himself.

Motivation is everything. The Baggster wouldn't get out of bed in the morning if he didn't have the promise of the senior-discount buffet at Sizzler and a fridge stocked with beer to motivate him. For Hopkins, RING championship belts are his Sizzler buffet, and naysayers telling him he's too old are his frosty fermented beverages.

But "The Executioner" isn't the only old fart who continues to carry the mentality of a young man with everything to prove. In fact, there's another fighter out there who dwarfs Hopkins when it comes to feeling like you're still fighting to prove a point and establish your legacy. He may be four years younger than B-Hop at age 40, but Glen Johnson is the true poster man (you can't call a 40-year-old a poster *boy*) for unceasing pugilistic hunger. If public recognition were a tray of hot dogs, Johnson would put Kobayashi to shame.

(Sorry for all the food references this month, but the Bagg-a-donuts just moved up another pants size and his gut is not only blocking his view of his feet, it's blocking his ability to use a wider variety of metaphors.)

Johnson just can't seem to get the fights he deserves sometimes, and all too often he can't seem to get the respect he deserves. Well, the Baggenbrau can't do too much about getting him fights (except call everyone who's ducking him a bunch of pantyhose-wearing, gutless cowards), but he can do something to balance out the lack of respect: He's telling you right now that Glen Johnson, who five years ago was a journeyman headed nowhere, will have the Baggletooth's Hall of Fame vote when his time comes. Yes, you read that right: Glen Johnson belongs in the Hall of Fame.

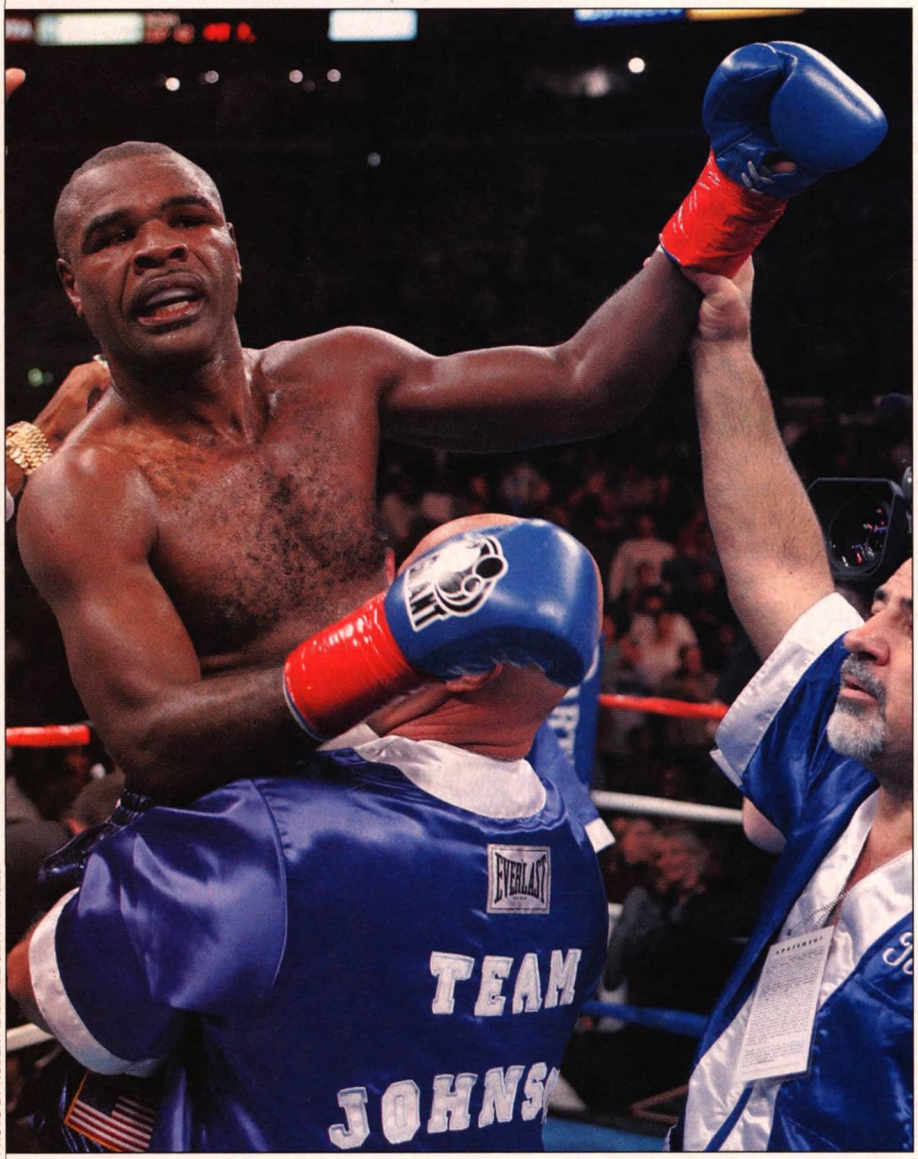
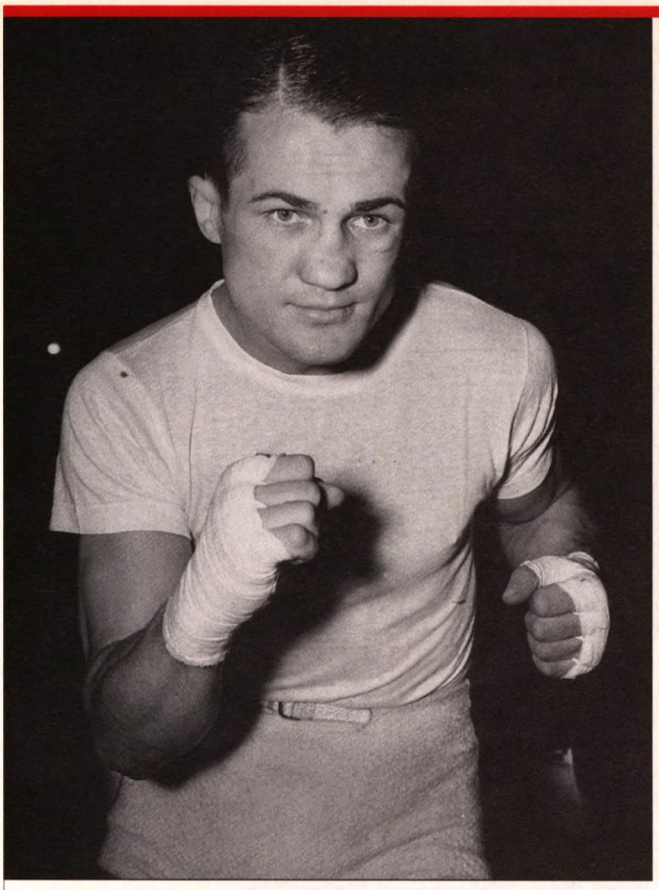


PHOTO BY ROBERT LABERGE/GETTY IMAGES

"The Road Warrior" has the Baggomatic's vote



Sixty-four losses didn't keep Zivic out of the Hall

Maybe the Baggomatic has a soft spot for Johnson because he's so old school. In a world in which most athletes are running out of space on their bodies to place tattoos and in which they're all wannabe rappers and rock stars, Johnson is light on style, heavy on substance. But it's not the soft spot that's putting a checkmark next to the Jamaican's name on a future Hall of Fame ballot. The cold, hard facts to support his induction are there.

Let's look at his record: 49-12-2 (33). It doesn't really look like a Hall of Famer's record, until you note that Fritzie Zivic had 64 losses, Joe Brown was defeated 44 times, Jersey Joe Walcott went 53-18-1, Matthew Saad Muhammad was 39-16-3, Joey Maxim was 82-29-4, and all of them are in the Hall. And more to the point, none of them are undeserving of being in the Hall. It goes to show you that there's much more to a fighter's quality than the numbers on his record.

And with Johnson's record in the particular, the numbers are deceiving because there are so many dubious decisions on there. If the two draws, against Daniel Judah and Clinton Woods, were really dead-even fights, then the Baggmotor's first wife was a dead ringer for Raquel Welch. Ask anyone who saw those fights, and they'll tell you they belong in Johnson's win column.

Among his losses, about half of them could be questioned: Joseph Kiwanuka, Sven Ottke, Omar Sheika, Julio Gonzalez, Woods in their third fight, and Chad Dawson. Some were out-and-out robberies, some were just debatable decisions, so let's play it conservatively and mark four of those six losses as wins.

All of a sudden, Johnson's record goes from an unimpressive 49-12-2 (33) to a presentable 55-8 (33). If the judges hadn't repeatedly taken him to the woodshed, his win-loss totals would fit in just fine among the plaques in Canastota.

In terms of awards and titles, Johnson isn't exactly Sugar Ray Robinson, but he's accomplished as much as plenty of other guys who've gotten voted into the Hall. Most notably, he was the 2004 RING (and everybody else's) Fighter of the Year. Every single Fighter of the Year in the 80-year history of the award who has been retired long enough to be Hall-eligible has been inducted, except for two, Gus Lesnevich and Donald Curry. And who knows, they might get in there someday. So that's a pretty significant award for "The Road Warrior" to have won. Plus he's held one major alphabet title and one RING championship. And he could have had another couple of belts if some controversial decisions had gone his way.

And, of course, there's the fact that on September 25, 2004, he knocked living legend Roy Jones into such a fog he probably thought he was in London when he woke up.

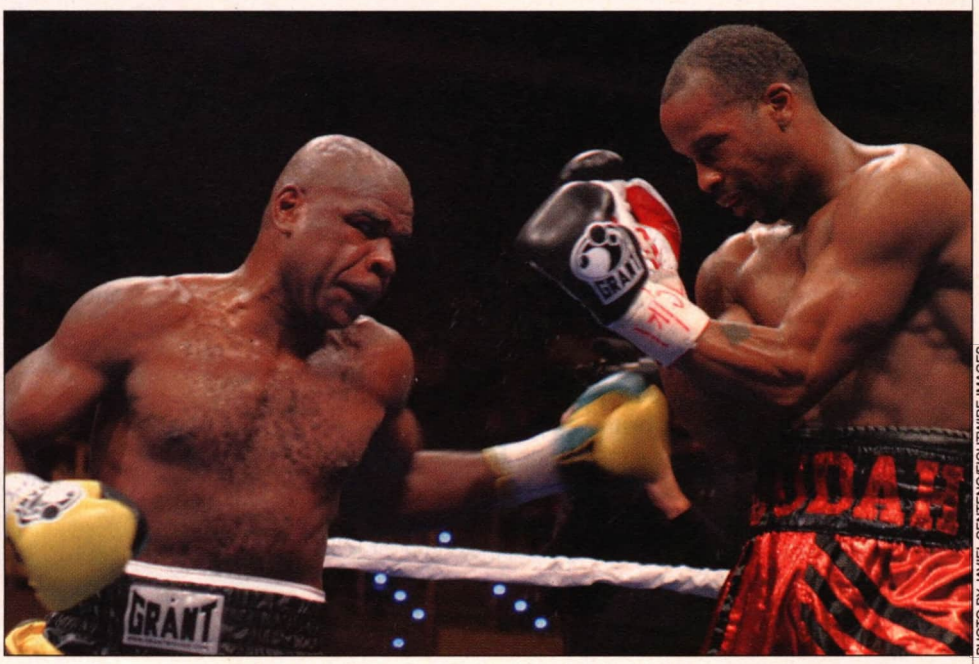


PHOTO BY JAVIEL CENTENO/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Johnson avenges controversial draw with Judah

True, stiffening an all-time great doesn't make you an all-time great. But before you dismiss the Jones win as a meaningless victory over a washed-up fighter, you should note that Joe Calzaghe, a sure-shot Hall of Famer, went on to score a less emphatic win over a Jones who was four years older.

And speaking of Calzaghe, he, like quite a few other top 168- and 175-pounders of the last several years, conveniently kept finding ways to avoid stepping into the ring with the relentless Johnson. One of the most ringing endorsements you can give to Johnson's Hall of Fame candidacy is that he may be remembered as the most avoided fighter of his time. Even Hopkins, who ducks no one, never granted Johnson a rematch after the Jamaican re-emerged as a championship-caliber fighter in '04, even though it would have been a logical fight during Hopkins' long inactive periods in '06 and '07. A few weeks after this magazine comes out, Chad Dawson is fighting a rematch against Antonio Tarver, whom he beat easily, rather than Johnson, which tells you a little bit about how much trouble Johnson gave the man Floyd Mayweather considers the best pound-for-pound fighter in the world.

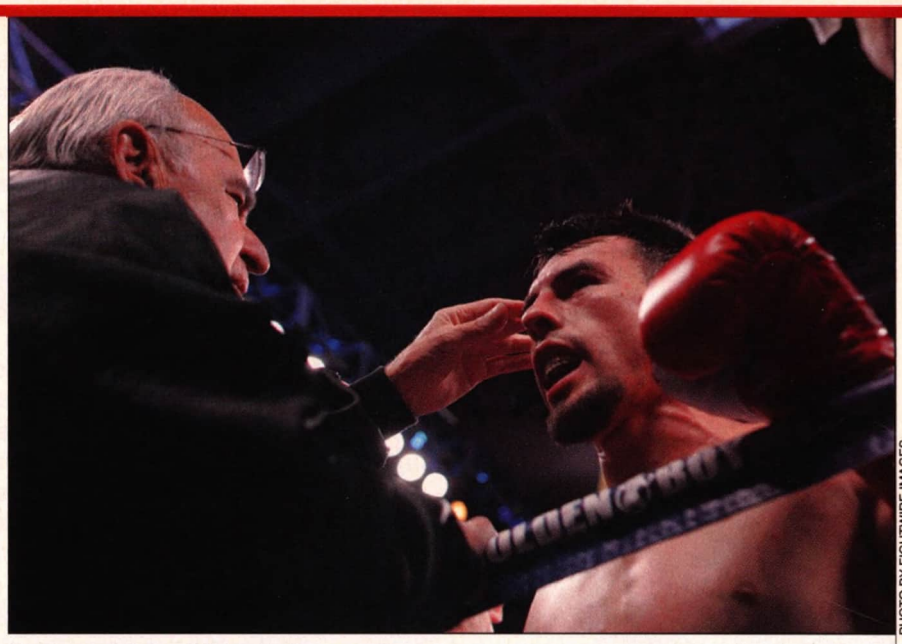


PHOTO BY FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

How bad was Guerrero's boo boo?

Johnson just keeps winning and just keeps looking a decade younger than he is, so the marquee fighters always seem to dig up some other opponent for an easier payday. And as long as Johnson feels he's the best light heavyweight in the world and can't land a chance to prove it, he's not going to start looking his age. His desire to make everybody believe in what he can do, and to get paid accordingly, is what keeps him young.

Well, at least one writer believes in what you can do, Glen. You'll have the Baggenbacher's Hall of Fame vote. Like most things in your life that are left in the hands of the judges, this one probably won't go your way in the end. But like the Baggorama at that all-you-can-eat Sizzler buffet, it doesn't cost you anything more to keep chugging forward and doing your thing for as long as you can.

The Ghost's Disappearing Act

If you need any explanation as to why Robert "The Ghost" Guerrero was so quick to call it a night the instant an unintentional head clash opened up his skin against Daud Yordan, re-watch the end of the first round and the abbreviated second round of the fight. Yordan was a quick-fisted son of a gun and he landed a pair of blazing right-left combos that informed Guerrero he was in for a long, and possibly losing, night. So Guerrero made it a short night.

There's just one problem, Robert: The boxing ring is not the best place for trying to hide the truth, especially when TV cameras are on hand. The world saw a reluctant warrior looking for the exits. That doesn't mean the Baggnana Split is writing The Ghost off completely. But he might want to watch a tape of Vitali Klitschko against Lennox Lewis to see what's expected of a quitter the next time out.

And The Stingray Goes To ...

The first sports-bra-wearing winner in the history of the award, Kina Malpartida, who wasn't supposed to provide too much resistance against previously undefeated junior lightweight Maureen Shea, but ended up scoring a 10th-round knockout.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA/TOP RANK

Malpartida: First female Stingray winner

The Monthly Mailbagg

To make up for the money he lost in Bernie Madoff's Ponzi scheme, the Baggenstein has to keep slaving away at the keyboard and earn paychecks. And that means another month of sifting through the e-mailed ramblings of the uneducated populace:

PHOTO BY PAUL GILHAM/GETTY IMAGES

Haye has yet to beat a top-10 heavyweight

Hey Jim,

I've been a boxing fan for decades and a technical geek longer than that, but I've never seen a *How Do They Do It?* episode or article on CompuBox. Are there sensors in the gloves? Is a human-monkey ringside pushing buttons based on what they saw? Do they have advanced DSP trajectory-tracking algorithms monitoring video feeds of their mitts? Or, is each boxer just really holding a Wii-controller inside his gloves??!!

I design circuits/sensors/PCBs for vibration/acceleration monitoring and know I could make wireless smart gloves that would give all the info (hand-speed, trajectory, force) real-time, just like NASCAR. Wasn't sure if CompuBox could tell the difference between Patty-Cake and Kelly Pavlik.

Mike Edick
Olney, MD

Edick-ted To Glove,

If you've been a boxing fan for decades, is it really possible that you still don't know how CompuBox works? Or is your whole e-mail just a big sarcastic, rhetorical-question-filled excuse to show off how smart you are? Either way, there's a darned good reason you've never seen a *How Do They Do It?* on CompuBox: because it would be the most boring segment or article you ever saw. People watch from ringside, try to determine what's landing and what isn't, and push buttons. It ain't rocket science. In fact, it isn't a science at all. It's a guessing game. And any journalist who relies on those numbers to support or shape their view of who won a fight needs a good hard bite on the neck from Humberto Toledo.

Look, we're all impressed that you design sensitive vibrators (that is what you said, right?). But the last thing boxing needs is to let computerized devices score fights for us. Before you know it, fighters will be tailoring their styles to the scoring system, and we'll have something as boring and pointless as what Olympic boxing has become.

Dear Baggnanimous,

Curious for your take on David Haye. This guy may be a loudmouth and an egomaniac, but ever since he decided to enter the heavyweight ranks, doesn't he deserve to be ranked above the likes of Valuev, Peter, Ibragimov, and Maskaev? Haye isn't to be found anywhere in any RING ratings. His record is still impressive, even if it was mostly as a light heavyweight and cruiserweight. What gives?

Joe Thompson
Charlotte, NC

Joe,

The Baggtazzmatron will keep this brief because you answered your own question. Haye has been a cruiserweight his whole career, except one fight in 2004 where he weighed 203½ and beat a clubfighter, one fight in 2005 where he weighed 206 and pounded on a stiff, one fight in 2007 where he weighed 217 and scored an impressive win over little-known Tomasz Bonin, and his kayo of Monte Barrett last November. He's had two semi-meaningful heavyweight fights in his career, neither against a top-10 fighter, and rankings are based on results. Or at least RING rankings are.

When "The Hayemaker" has done something to warrant being ranked as a heavyweight, you can be sure that Collins and Santoliquito will hurry back from their extra-long liquid lunches to install him in the top 10.

Kina (you think the Baggadoodle is typing that last name again?) brought a mediocre record of 8-3 (2) into the contest at Madison Square Garden, whereas Shea was 13-0 (7). And things went according to plan early, as Shea, the so-called "Real Million Dollar Baby," scored a first-round knockdown. But Kina recovered quickly and gradually tore Shea down just like the stadium she shares a name with. (Apparently, just like the Mets, finishing well isn't Shea's strong suit.) Kina knocked the Bronx native down in the 10th and ref Eddie Cotton stopped the fight with the Peruvian pounding away on the stunned prefight favorite.

Whether the combatants are male or female, it's fun to watch an underdog have his or her day. The only difference when a lady wins the Stingray is that the Baggdaddy demands she pick up her award in person. The Baggett Hound will now change into his cleanest bathrobe and put a pipe in his mouth in anticipation of Kina's arrival. ■

Jim Bagg can be reached at Baggmeister@yahoo.com.

[Come Out Writing]

Letters may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, THE RING, P.O. Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034.

Or e-mail letters to comeoutwriting@yahoo.com. E-mailed letters will include the writer's e-mail address unless a city and state of origin is provided.

Well-Deserved Honor

Finally, justice. Brian Mitchell has been inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame. I grew up in Johannesburg in the 1980s watching Mitchell fight on local TV, and I used to say to people all the time, "This guy's going to win a world title, and he's going to keep it."

Unlike other South African fighters like Gerrie Coetzee, for whom winning the world title was the end of the dream, with Mitchell it was the beginning. That workmanlike quality was apparent even whilst watching him on those local boxing shows: He didn't do any one thing brilliantly, he just did a lot very well, and to this day, he's the only fighter I've ever seen whose work rate increased as the fight wore on. It was like slow poison to his opponents.

The rub against him was always his quality of opposition as a champion, but if that's a factor, then Rocky Marciano shouldn't be in the IBHOF either. The mitigating factor to that is that because of South Africa's then apartheid policies, Mitchell is the only champion in history who was forced to make every single defense (a record 12), plus a title-unifying win against Tony Lopez, in the other guy's backyard.

From one South African to another, a hearty congratulations to the Road Warrior.

BRAD MORRIS
Astoria, NY

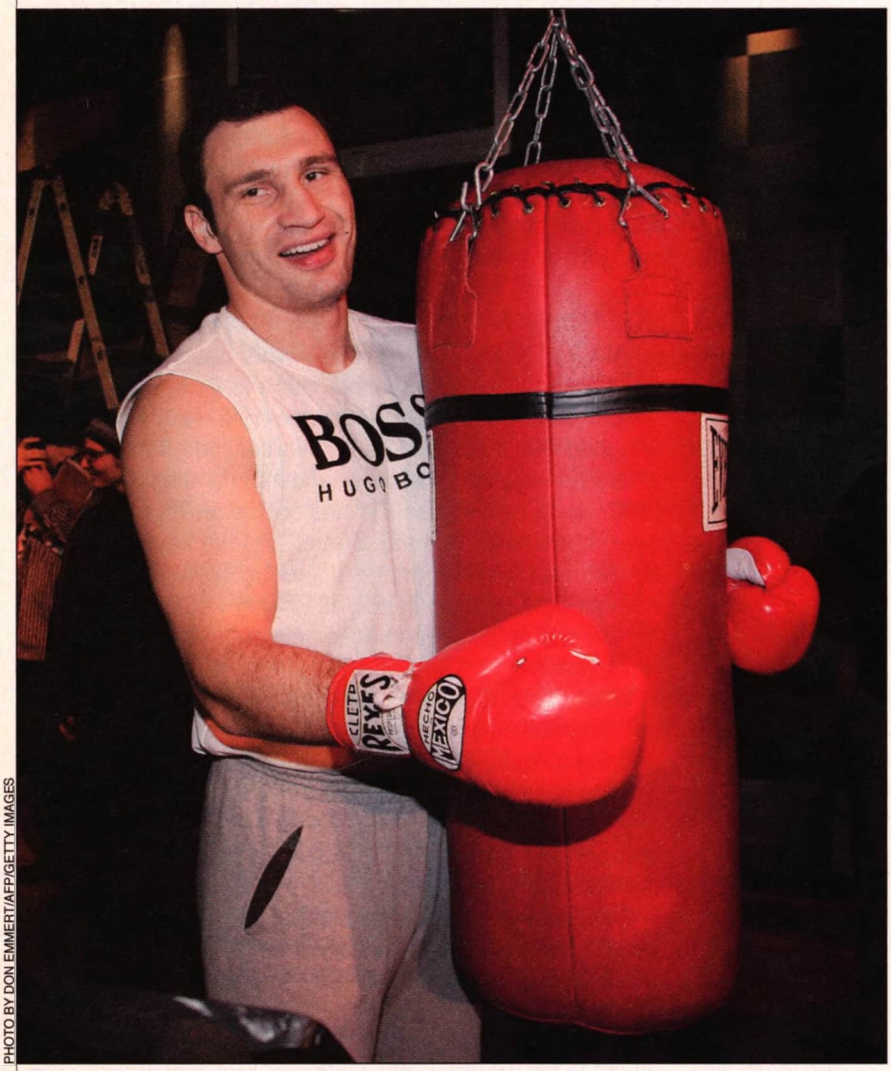


PHOTO BY DON EMMERT/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The "Battle Of the Legends" feature in the April 2009 issue created a lot of interest. Naturally, many readers had different opinions about the outcome of the fantasy fights, including Vitali Klitschko fan Mark McKee, who believes Vitali would have beaten Larry Holmes.

A Vote For Vitali

I just wanted to write and tell you how much I enjoyed reading the "Battle Of The Legends" in the April 2009 issue. It was really thought provoking for real boxing diehards like myself. I especially enjoyed the heavyweight match between all-time greats Larry Holmes and Vitali Klitschko.

But the experts' opinions disappointed me not because of their picks, but rather their lack of support of their respective choices. I think Max Kellerman is the most knowledgeable expert in the boxing world today, and he gave great reasons why Klitschko should win, but at the last second picked Holmes because he had so much more heart. What about the facts? Holmes was floored by Earnie Shavers and Renaldo Snipes and won a split decision over Carl Williams. Vitali, on the other hand, has never been on the deck and dominated the top fighters in the division. Even in his two losses, to

Chris Byrd and Lennox Lewis, he was well ahead on points before injury and cuts forced the fights to end.

For the record, I see Holmes having a tough time overcoming the size difference, with Klitschko winning a close decision.

MARK McKEE
Richardson, TX

Officious Official

Did you notice Laurence Cole stinking up a glorious night for boxing on February 28 in Houston? I've never seen a referee manhandle fighters like that. Chris John and Rocky Juarez were acting professional in their clinches, but Cole still felt it necessary to slap the top of their heads like he was in a Three Stooges movie. The worst of it happened in the fifth and eighth rounds when Cole was pulling John's arm off Juarez and then holding on to it while Juarez was still swinging and landing. I'm surprised John's corner didn't speak up.

RICHARD ESCOTO
Monterey Park, CA

Bloody Loophole

I'm very confused as to the handling in recent years of cuts as a result of an accidental butt. I understand fully that the standard rule is that if the cut causes a fight to be stopped in four rounds or less the fight is ruled a no-decision. Beyond that, it goes to the scorecards (anybody who has ever listened to Harold Lederman knows that!), but what I'm unsure about is if the doctor and the referee determine that the fight can continue, what is the result if the fighter refuses to go on?

I ask because it seemed to me that Robert Guerrero wanted his fight with Daud Yordan stopped. The referee and the doctor didn't seem to think it was bad enough to halt the bout and stopped it begrudgingly. Under the current rules, could the referee insist the fight continue and would it be a TKO if the fighter refused? If so, that would seem to be an ugly loophole for a fighter who builds a considerable lead in the first half of the fight, starts to fade, and is accidentally cut and decides to quit and get the win. What's the official rule on this and what is the opinion of THE RING?

JOSEPH WHITNEY
New Haven, CT

Editor's note: Rules concerning who can stop a fight vary, depending on where the fight takes place. In many jurisdictions only the referee can stop a fight, but the referee rarely goes against the doctor's advice. Although many viewers shared the same impression as you about the end of the Guererro-Yordan fight, referee Jon Schorle told ringtv.com, "I was going to stop it. It was really, really deep. Since the blood was going directly into his eye, I stopped it immediately."

THE RING has always felt that the current cut-eye rules are ripe for abuse, but the alternative—victory via headbutt—is arguably worse. The best safeguards are well-trained referees and ring physicians who are capable of knowing when a fighter or his corner is attempting to misuse the rules.

Inconclusive Conclusion

I think Amir Khan should offer Marco Antonio Barrera a rematch. Barrera was fighting with one eye for most of the fight, which meant he couldn't judge distance. Without the cut, it might have been a completely different fight.

Khan looked good even before the cut, but it's easy for an athletic fighter to look good for less than a round against a slow pressure fighter. It's much harder to look good for 12 rounds. Ali looked great for the first four rounds in his first fight with Joe Frazier, who barely landed a punch. Then Frazier started to catch up with him in round five and it became a war of attrition.

I think Khan would have won handily without the cut, but it's not a foregone conclusion, and I think to offer Barrera a rematch would be the right thing to do. If Barrera says no, it would make Khan look good. If Barrera says yes, it would be likely to be a much sterner test and a good learning experience for Khan, with Barrera having 12 rounds with the use of two eyes and Khan's stamina under pressure still being untested at this point.

DAVE RADO
Colchester, UK ■

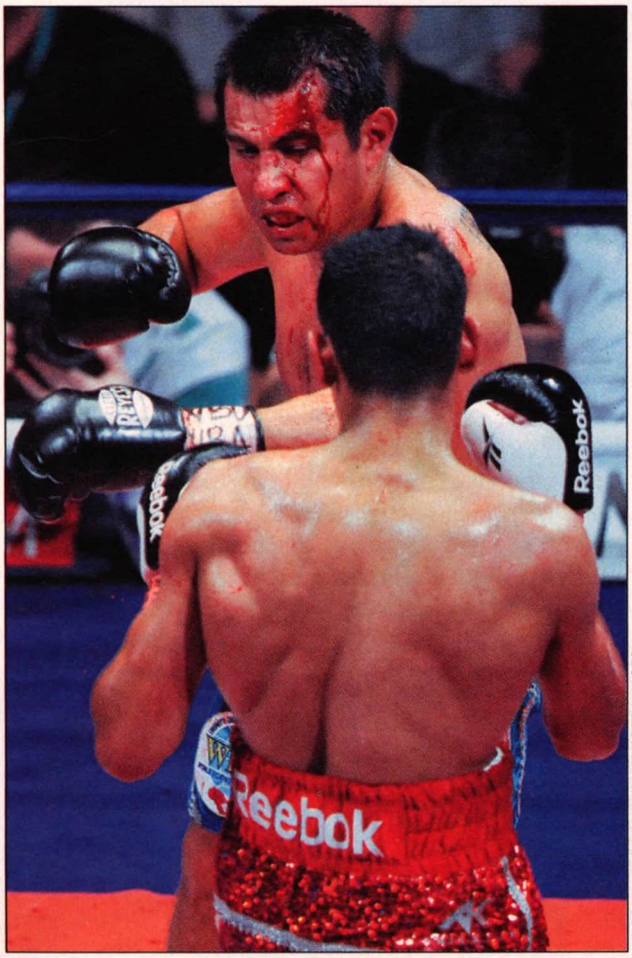


PHOTO BY ANDREW YATES/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Despite a nasty scalp cut, Marco Antonio Barrera battled on against Amir Khan until the fight was stopped in the fifth round. Reader Dave Rado thinks that due to the way the cut hampered Barrera, Khan should offer the Mexican a rematch.

By Joseph Santoliquito

Pavlik On A Snake Hunt

PHOTO BY MIKE GREENHILL

Pavlik is looking at Mora as another step back

Middleweight champion **Kelly Pavlik** went through a stage in his career when he was criticized for the caliber of opponents he was chewing up. That began to change when the Youngstown, Ohio, native vanquished hard-punching **Edison Miranda** in May 2007. It changed dramatically when "The Ghost" stopped **Jermain Taylor** for THE RING middleweight world championship, then moved up and beat Taylor again at a catch-weight of 164 pounds.

Now, after being dominated by **Bernard Hopkins** in a non-title fight in October '08, Pavlik finds himself trying to work his way back toward the elite status he enjoyed before being schooled by B-Hop. The first step back was beating **Marco Antonio Rubio** (KO 9) in February, and it now appears that **Sergio Mora**, winner of the first season of *The Contender* and the former WBC junior middleweight titleholder, is step two.

Pavlik, 35-1 (31), is penciled in to meet "The Latin Snake" on July 18 or July 25, at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City. Nothing was signed as of press time, and there were rumors that the relationship between Team Pavlik and Top Rank is not what it once was. Still, Top Rank was forging ahead anyway.

The grand scheme is to package Pavlik-Mora as a split-site pay-per-view. **Bob Arum**'s promotional giant ran a split-site PPV on February 21, when Pavlik fought Rubio in Youngstown and **Miguel Cotto** took on **Michael Jennings** at Madison Square Garden. This time, it would feature Pavlik from Atlantic City, his home away from Youngstown, and **Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.** from Mexico, against an opponent to be announced (Much depends on Chavez surviving **Luciano Cuello**, a fight scheduled to take place on March 28, after this magazine went to press.

"The fight with Rubio, who is a solid guy, was good for Kelly, because he did well at home and there is a market out there for him," said **Cameron Dunkin**, Pavlik's manager. "We're sort of frozen though. HBO wants Kelly to fight **Arthur Abraham**. Kelly is dying for that fight; he'll fight anyone. But the money has to be right. I want to see Kelly get paid. I don't want to see some guy who's not an attraction here get all of the money, and we're not going to Europe to fight Abraham if the money's not right.

"Kelly would go to Europe, but he doesn't want to be treated like an opponent anymore. Kelly was treated as an opponent against Miranda and Taylor. We think we're beyond that. He's the middleweight champion of the world and he's an attraction in Atlantic City."

Whether or not Mora, 25-1 (5), is the right opponent for the rebuilding Pavlik is another question altogether. True, Mora is not much of a threat to score a knockout, but he's quick, crafty, and almost impossible to look good against due to his elusive style. Moreover, he lost his last fight when **Vernon Forrest** regained the WBC 154-pound strap. Even so, Mora, currently rated six at junior middle by THE RING, is not likely to be as noncompetitive as Rubio, whose just-glad-to-be-here performance was nothing short of pathetic.

According to Dunkin, Mora would be second in a three-fight plan for Pavlik in '09.

"We're trying to keep Kelly as active as we can," the manager said. "We're not ruling out Abraham, but let's get by Mora first."

Listen Up

Anthony Mundine, 35-3 (23), who has campaigned at super middle for most of his career, will try to make a name for himself at middleweight by taking on THE RING's ninth-rated **Daniel Geale**, 21-0 (13), on May 27 in Australia ... Following a postponement, the most unwarranted rematch in recent history is upon us again, as IBF light heavyweight titlist **Chad Dawson** grants fading former light heavyweight champion **Antonio Tarver** a May 9 rematch on HBO. Dawson, 27-0 (17), thoroughly dominated Tarver, 27-5 (19), in the first clash between the two southpaws, begging the question why anyone would want to see it again? ■

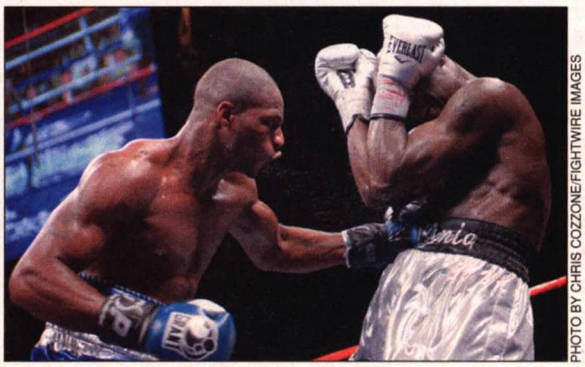


PHOTO BY CHRIS COZZONE/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Does anyone want to see Dawson and Tarver again?

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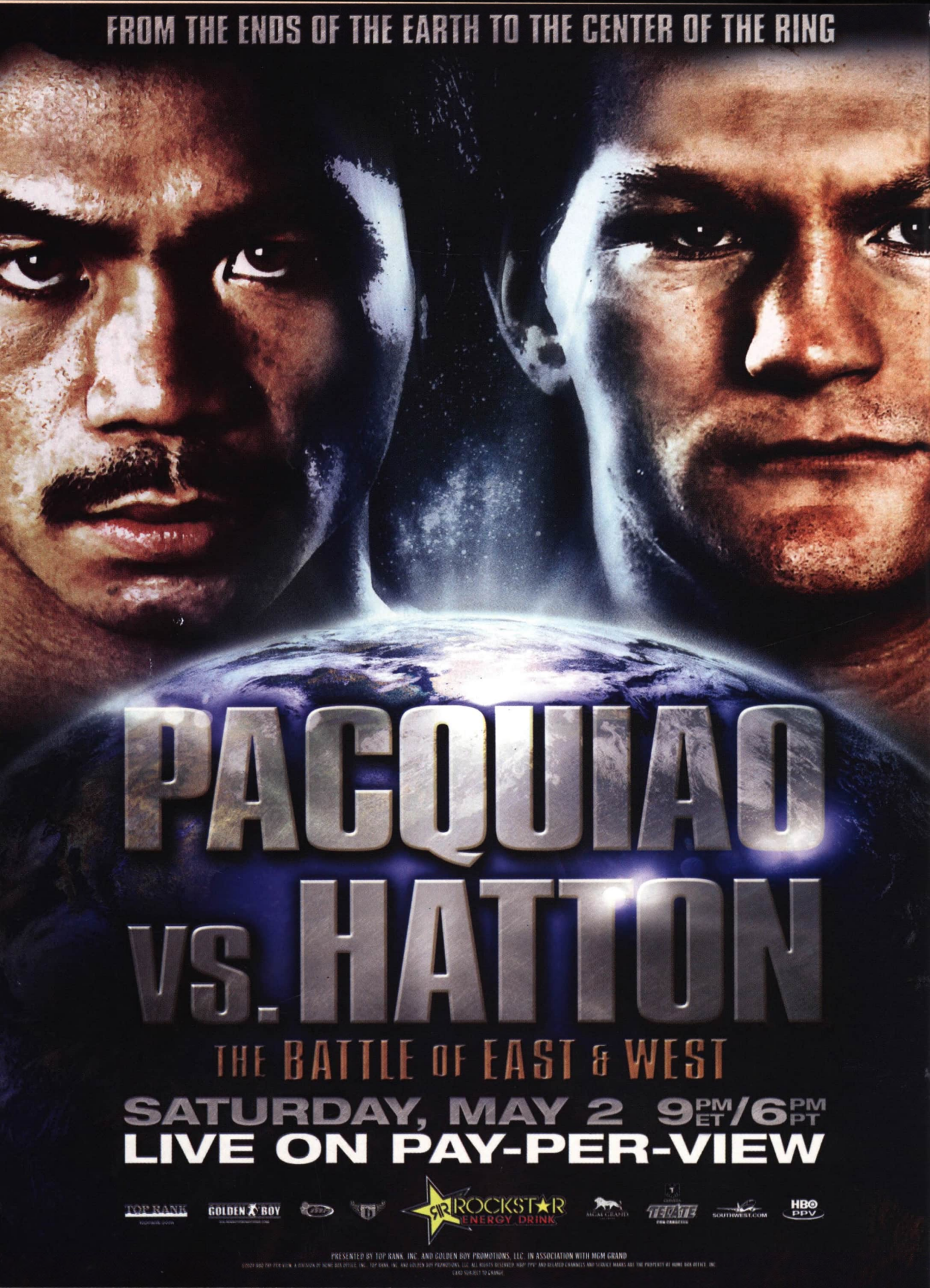
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